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WHAT AFR
THINKS OF
KARL MARX

Botha's 'Total Strategy

The OAU after 20 years

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EDITORIAL NOTES

WHAT AFRICA THINKS OF KARL MARX

An international theoretical conference on the theme "Karl Marx and Our Time: The Struggle for Peace and Social Progress" was held under the auspices of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany in Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, from April 11 to 16, 1983. It was one of the most remarkable international conferences held in recent years, attended by representatives of 145 communist and workers' parties, revolutionary vanguard parties, national revolutionary parties and liberation movements, socialist and social democratic parties from 111 countries. The range of views represented was extremely wide, but all were united in their desire to pay homage to Marx on the occasion of the 165th anniversary of his birth and the 100th anniversary of his death.

The SED had prepared for the conference with great care and thoroughness and the entire proceedings took place in an atmosphere of harmony and decorum, despite the occasional sharp differences of view expressed. The conference was opened by Erich Honecker, general secretary of the SED Central Committee and Chairman of the GDR Council of State, who in his speech pointed out that Marx and Engels accomplished the prodigious feat of "transforming socialism from a utopian vision into a scientific doctrine. By infusing scientific socialism into the labour movement, they enabled the working class of all lands and the oppressed of this world to recognise their own strength and to use it to throw off the shackles of capitalism".

Not all those who call themselves Marxists today are agreed about the strategy and tactics which should be followed to achieve socialism, but the conference showed, as comrade Honecker pointed out, that the ideas of Karl Marx have had "a lasting effect on the development of scientific and philosophical theory. No modern social science can escape the cogency of Marx's reasoning. Adopting a position on Marx has become a crucial element in intellectual and political debate".

The conference was completely free and open. Each delegation was asked to present a paper of approximately 5,000 words and allocated about 15 minutes of conference time in which to deliver it. Sometimes this resulted in the delivered speech being a shortened version of the original paper, but in all cases the paper was published in full the next day in *Neues Deutschland,* the organ of the Central Committee of the SED, which was specially enlarged for the purpose. Every delegation which wanted to was given time to address the conference, and 140 of the 145 delegations present did so, the remaining five presenting written depositions which were also published in *Neues Deutschland.* Nobody could accuse the SED of attempting to impose any form of censorship on the proceedings, however much it may have disagreed with some of the remarks made by some of the delegates. What must it have thought, for example, of the speech of Dr Wilhelm Bruns, of the Social Democratic Party of West Germany, who referred to the conference chairman as "Mr" instead of "comrade" (contrary to the invariable custom of his own party), did not once mention the name of Marx, and devoted his speech to defending the position of the western powers in relation to the current negotiations over nuclear disarmament?

Conference sat for 6 days from 9 in the morning to 8 at night, with breaks for meals and refreshments. The importance placed on it by the SED was reflected in the treatment given to it by comrade Honecker himself. Not only did he deliver the opening and closing addresses, but he also sat through every session, listening to every word spoken by every delegate. During the breaks he had formal discussions with representatives of as many delegations as he could find time for. Other SED Central Committee members carried out their conference duties with equal single-mindedness. The conference was rounded off with a banquet and concert at which top artists of the GDR performed, concluding with freedom songs from a number of countries and "The Internationale" sung in rousing style by massed choir with orchestral accompaniment.

The main emphasis of the conference was placed on the need to fight for peace. Comrade Honecker said in this concluding address:

> "The last quarter of the twentieth century impressively reveals that the ideas with which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels mapped out the path to a life without exploitation of man by man, to freedom and independence of all nations, to peace and social progress, are more relevant than ever before . . . On the basis of Marxism-Leninism the working class and its party, together with all working people, are successfully building a world of genuine human dignity in the countries where real socialism prevails. Inspired by the triumphant advance of socialism, the peoples of the various continents are striving for national and social liberation, taking their cause into their own hands and defending their sovereignty and freedom.
>
> "The world-historic effect of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the fact that the Soviet Union exists and is becoming ever stronger, the fact that socialism has become a world system and that its international influence is growing more and more is of decisive importance for the destiny of mankind. Imperialism has lost its former omnipotence once and for all, although, as is well known, it is sparing no efforts to force its authority once again upon the peoples of the world".

Most delegates had stressed the danger of the imperialists' preparations for war, and particularly the proposed stationing of Pershing and Cruise missiles in Europe and Reagan's laser beam plans for the militarisation of outer space. In his speech, Gus Hall, general secretary of the Communist Party of the USA, warned:

> "The world must understand that at this moment the Reagan Administration has absolutely no intention of negotiating a disarmament treaty with the Soviet Union".

Comrade Honecker's concluding words were:

> "People have a right to economic, social and cultural progress. What they need above all is peace. A nuclear inferno, which would mean the self-annihilation of humankind, must be prevented . . . Those who have subscribed to confrontation, who no longer regard only our planet but also outer space as a potential battlefield, who are toying with the idea of a first strike and reckoning with a nuclear holocaust, must not be given a chance.
>
> "Gathered together in order to honour Karl Marx, we have reaffirmed at this conference our determination to pool our efforts in the struggle for peace and social progress. It is our common will not to plunge the world into a nuclear inferno. Present and future generations, mothers and fathers, children and our children's children shall be without fear of a new world war. They shall live in peace".

This conference held to honour Karl Marx brought together, in the first place, all contingents of the international Communist movement, with the exception only of China and Albania. From this point of view alone it was the most significant conference of its kind since the 1960s, uniting in one forum many whose differences over the meaning of Marxism in the modern world had so often kept them apart in recent years. One of the many fascinations of the conference was that none of these differences were suppressed. The Communist Parties of Japan, Spain, Italy, Great Britain, the Yugoslav League of Communists and others openly stated their views on democracy, pluralism, human rights, Afghanistan and other issues of controversy. The conference produced no resolution or final declaration, yet it was rich in its subtle internal debate.

Nor was it only the Communist Parties that took part in this debate. Chile was represented, for example, not only by Volodia Teitelboim of the Communist Party, but also by representatives of the Socialist Party, the Radical Party and the Movement of the Revolutionary Left; India by Rajeswara Rao and V. Subbiah of the Communist Party, E. M. S. Namboodiripad and Ramdass Menon of the CPI(M), and Chandulal Chandrakar and C. M. Stephen of the Indian National Congress (I). Greece had three representatives of the Communist Party and two of the Panhellenistic Movement. West Germany and Finland wre represented by delegates from both the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party, Norway by the CP and the Labour Party, Sweden by the Labour Party-Communists, the Left Party-Communists and the Social Democratic Labour Party, Palestine by the PLO and the Palestine Communist Party; Italy by both the Communist and Socialist Parties; Bolivia by the Left Revolutionary National Movement, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left and the Bolivian Communist Party.

No fewer than 26 parties from sub-Saharan Africa were represented and among the delegates were two heads of state (President Machel of Mozambique and President Dr Manuel Pinto da Costa of Sao Tome and Principe) as well as Cabinet Ministers of the ruling parties in a number of countries. Many African parties took a public stand on Marxism in a way they had never done before.

One hundred years after the death of Marx, Marxism proved itself at this conference to be a powerful force for unity in the struggle for peace and social progress. The papers and speeches will eventually be published in book form in a number of languages and deserve to be studied in depth because of the light they shed on current thought and action under the banner of Marxism. We publish below extracts from a few of the papers presented by delegates from Africa which will underline the importance of the occasion and bring to our readers something of the flavour of the proceedings.

MOSES MABHIDA, General Secretary of the South African Communist Party:

Marx showed that the history of human society was the history of class struggle, and analysed contemporary capitalist society to show how this struggle was being waged between the bourgeoisie, who owned the means of production, and the proletariat, who owned nothing but their labour power. Through his theory of surplus value he showed how the wealth produced by the proletarian majority was appropriated by the bourgeois minority, how society was becoming increasingly polarised, with more and more wealth accumulating at one pole accompanied by desperate poverty at the other, how the relations of production become fetters to the forces of production, leading to persistent and recurring economic crises, how the proletariat is goaded into action in order to defend its very right to exist and becomes the grave-digger of the bourgeois system.

In what way have the writings of Marx become outdated or disproved by history? Capital moves as it has always moved, guided only by the never-ceasing search for private profit at the expense of the masses, leading to conflict between nations, and between classes within nations. With increasing millions in the capitalist countries becoming unemployed and reliant for their survival on soup kitchens or the dole, who can argue that capitalism has diminished the gap between the haves and the have-nots, between those who own the means of production and distribution, and those who own nothing but their labour power?

In South Africa, the hapless millions in the Bantustans, denied both land and work, starve to death in circumstances of unspeakable misery. In Africa as a whole most countries have seen no growth at all in their economies over the past decades. Indeed Africa is the only continent in the world where per capita food production has declined steadily. The living standards and hopes of the people are crushed by the increasing burden of imports and indebtedness.

The methods of capitalist exploitation have changed since Marx's day, but the inner contradiction remains and, despite all the efforts of social democrats, reformists and other opportunists, can never be resolved while capitalism lasts.

On the other hand it is in the Soviet Union, which is implementing the teachings of Marx, where private ownership of the means of production and distribution has been abolished, that class struggle and the gap between the haves and have-nots have been eliminated. It is in the Soviet Union, under socialism, that the transfer of resources has taken place to enable those living at the lower levels at the time of the revolution to advance towards the highest. Today there are no disadvantaged peoples in the Soviet Union, no slums, no illiterates, no unemployed, no homeless, no soup kitchens. The distinctions between the living standards of the various national entities of the Soviet Union have been steadily eliminated. No doubt much remains to be done, for social change is a slow and difficult process, and the recent speeches of Comrade Andropov, speaking in the name of the Central Committee of the CPSU, have indicated the areas in which changes, reforms and innovations have to be brought about. In the Soviet Union, the GDR and other socialist countries the elimination of the private profit motive and the substitution of social ownership of the means of production and distribution have opened the way, not only for economic and technological advance, but for the betterment of the human condition.

More and more countries and peoples are orientating themselves towards socialism and against capitalism and imperialism. National movements of liberation everywhere acknowledge the socialist countries as their natural allies.

ALFRED NZO, Secretary General of the African National Congress of South Africa

As early as 1864, at a time when our own forebears were still locked in heroic wars of resistance to save our country from enslavement by European colonial powers, Marx pointed to the historic relationship between the struggles for national liberation and the emancipation of the working class. Thus in his open letter to Abraham Lincoln he characterized the American Civil War as one fought "for the rescue of an enchained race and the reconstruction of a social world". He further observed that: "While the working man (in the U.S.) allowed slavery to defile their own republic they were unable to attain the true freedom of labour or to support their European brethren in their struggle for emancipation..."

In the same year, in his address to the inaugural meeting of the First

International, again speaking about the American Civil War, Marx said:

> "It was not the wisdom of the ruling classes, but the heroic resistance to their criminal folly by the working classes of England that saved the West of Europe from plunging headlong into an infamous crusade for the perpetuation and propagation of slavery on the other side of the Atlantic."

To this day, that alliance between the forces of socialist revolution and national emancipation about which Marx wrote 99 years ago, remains a powerful motive force in the struggle against imperialist domination. During the present century, and especially after the Second World War, it dealt a death blow to the system of colonialism. As a consequence of the defeat of capital and the transfer of power into the hands of the working people, the national question has, in the main, been solved in the socialist countries on the basis of the complete recognition of the right of the peoples to national self-determination and adherence to the principles of proletarian internationalism.

Inspired by hostility to these results and in an attempt to guarantee its own victory, imperialism is bent on driving a wedge between the socialist and the national liberation movements. The most reactionary forces in this camp, today represented and led by the Reagan Administration, are busy propagating the myth that the struggle for national liberation is but the manifestation of a devilish plan of the Soviet Union to dominate the world.

This rabid anti-Sovietism of course has its proponents in Pretoria where, for the past 35 years, the ruling fascist party has elevated the doctrine of anti-communism to the level of state policy. Behind this policy, described as Christian Nationalism, there lies a practice of unbridled capitalist exploitation, colonial and racist oppression, fascist repression and imperialist aggression and expansionism...

The peoples of South Africa and Namibia are confronted with increasing oppression, repression and terror...

The apartheid regime and its allies are however forced into these desperate and hopeless ideological, political and military adventures and manoeuvres because of the growing strength, combativeness and the ideological and political clarity and cohesiveness of the forces of national liberation in our region.

The masses of the oppressed people in our country are united behind the ANC and its allies. As a result of continuous and heroic political and military struggles that the enemy has failed and will fail to stop, the balance of strength within South Africa is shifting inexorably in favour of the forces of national and social emancipation.

SAMORA MACHEL, President of FRELIMO and of the People's Republic of Mozambique:

It was only a few men and women who accompanied Marx to his last resting place in the London cemetery. Today the lives of millions of people are deeply influenced and changed by the living ideas of Marx. The toiling masses in four continents took their destiny in their own hands, are building a future of happiness and are constructing socialism and communism.

The experiences of the revolutionary struggle of the Mozambican people are an illustration.

The liberation struggle in our fatherland emerged as a result of contradiction between the colonially oppressed and the colonialists, between the exploited and the exploiters. Reforms for national rebirth were in the nature of things out of the question under colonial fascism.

It was impossible in Mozambique to form legal social organisations, least of all a national party or trade union. It was unthinkable to have a dialogue with the colonialists — a dialogue would lead to autonomy or independence.

The historic alternative for our people rested in the application of revolutionary force, so as to end fascist force. The Marxist thesis to declare war on war so as to achieve peace proved its correctness.

The plantation workers, the poor peasants who were forced to do contract labour, formed the social basis for the organisation and formation of the liberation front in Mozambique.

During the armed liberation struggle there emerged liberated zones. We had to decide practically what sort of power was to be established in these areas. With the production of material goods, fundamental questions were posed very sharply. It became necessary to clarify the question of whom this struggle is meant to serve, since as well as old feudal lords also new exploiters striving to be bourgeoisie wanted to establish their power over the people.

The conflicts within the liberation front, especially in the period from 1967 to 1970, were class conflicts. As a result of the correct solution of conflicts, the revolution in Mozambique took a qualitative leap forward. Again this proved that class struggle results in historic progress.

The establishment of liberated zones made it possible and timely to pose the question of production relations and the question of power, and in the context of the regaining of independence the question was posed as to which form the social order will take.

In this way and in the process of class struggle and in the nucleus of the liberation front and liberated zones was laid the foundation of a

Marxist-Leninist Party, of a socialist revolution, of a people's democratic state.

The revolutionary process took momentum. The acceleration of the process was towards socialism, depsite the fact that the size of the working class was small and that it had a low consciousness as a class.

The war situation acted as a great catalyst which, thanks to the political work, stimulated the understanding for the real goals of the conflict. The consciousness that great sacrifices are necessary aroused in the society a feeling for the necessity of a radical change of their inner relationships.

These experiences which have been gained by humanity in the struggle against exploitation and which have been generalised by Marxism, enable the revolutionary movement in Mozambique to make use of them and to assimilate them. The revolutionary practice under the conditions of Mozambique led us to the victory of the socialist revolution, to the introduction of the construction of socialism, despite conditions of illiteracy, of a small working class and the absence of a Marxist-Leninist Party. The struggle of the toiling masses of Mozambique under the leadership of a nucleus of a vanguard formed by the liberation front, enabled us to find the right answers to these problems.

As specific as the revolutionary experience of each people is, it does not exist outside of Marxist thinking.

This all-round expose of fundamental aspects of our experiences points to some conclusions.

The first conclusion concerns the universality of class struggle; of contradiction as a motive force of history.

The second conclusion identifies the leading and determining role of the ideology of the working class in the solution of dominant social conflicts in the current epoch.

Even in countries like ours with a weak industrial base, as this is up to now the case, a socialist revolution is possible. This triumphed in Mozambique with the victory of the people's liberation war. It triumphed in Lenin's spirit as the balance of forces, as the dedication to build socialism; because the interests and ideas of the proletariat came to power with the support of the people.

Marxist thinking shows that the solution of the question of who seizes and exercises power is vital and decisive.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is today as topical as during the times of the Commune. On it depends the role of the state in a complicated and protracted process of the change of social relations, in the establishment of the material and scientific basis, in the education of the people. This role of the state and the whole question of leading the society demands the organisation of the vanguard of the toiling masses into a party, which is armed with the scientific ideology of the proletariat. At the Third Congress of 1977, our Marxist-Leninist Party emerged out of the liberation front.

DR EDDISON ZVOGBO, Secretary for Information of ZANU (PF) and Minister of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Zimbabwe

Thank you, Comrade Chairman for affording the delegation of the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) an opportunity to make our modest contribution at this most historic conference which is being held in honour of Germany's — indeed, mankind's greatest son — Karl Marx.

But, before going further, please allow me, Comrade Chairman, to convey, at the very outset, to dear Comrade Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED, the entire SED Party, the government and people of this historic country, revolutionary greetings from Comrade Robert Mugabe, President of ZANU (PF), the Central Committee, the Party and the people of Zimbabwe — revolutionary salutations and greetings.

Marxism is a guide, the only true guide, to action. Marxism inspires us to study and understand the fundamental laws of struggle for socialism, hence the struggle continues in various spheres of social relations. Marxism inspired our cadres' will to win the war and they became much more effective in the battle to liberate Zimbabwe from colonialism, racism and imperialism. It will continue to inspire the same people and give them an inner urge to advance towards socialism.

In three years of independence we have established a Government of National Unity led and spearheaded by ZANU(PF); we have proclaimed a policy of national reconciliation; we have brought about free primary education for all our people, abolished racism, introduced a free national health service for those who cannot afford it; unified our armed forces; embarked upon massive resettlement on lands that had been stolen; created new people-oriented economic and social structures that negate the capitalist greed for profits and launched a three-year National Transitional Development Plan. We are self-sufficient in food and have more than our share of national resources. We cannot fail our socialist and communist allies here assembled. Destiny beckons us to struggle harder to achieve greater and more decisive conquests for socialism.

To succeed we need peace. In our region the racist South African regime plays the role of Israel in the Middle East. It is the agent provocateur of United States imperialism. We have been the object of repeated acts of aggression by South Africa. Acts of sabotage on our pipe-line, rail-roads, military installations and economic projects have been carried out in broad daylight. Some of our erstwhile compatriots in the Patriotic Front have been seduced by imperialism into banditry, treason and subversion. Some have succumbed to South African offers of money into agreeing to undergo military training against us in that country. Our neighbours Mozambique and Angola have also been the objects of racist and fascist South African attacks. The same enemies of peace and progress continue to keep Namibians in bondage. The spurious linkage between their liberation and the presence of Cuban comrades in Angola has been dismissed by the Front-line leaders as the charade it is.

At the end of the day, comrades, the entire Socialist Camp, Africa, Latin America and Asia must recognise that lasting peace depends only in having a strong Soviet Union. The rest is dangerous illusion. I have seen in Wankie game reserve in Western Zimbabwe, a lion drink from the same pond with hares and other smaller animals in apparent peace because of the acuteness of the drought this year. It is an illusion for these little comrades to believe that the lion has become peace-loving. it will strike with a vengeance at the moment of its own choosing. The capitalist world must be made to know and understand that a nuclear war will leave behind no shareholders. It will burn the Stock Exchange as thoroughly as their Swiss numbered accounts, villas on the Riviera and Hollywood as it will us of the Third World — "the wretched of the Earth". No debate will make them know this. Only a strong Soviet nuclear capability which assures mutual destruction will be our insurance policy. It is the only viable share certificate in the preservation of peace. We therefore support Comrade Andropov's stand in Geneva. This is so even if you do not love the Soviets. It is so even if we love only ourselves. It is reality for us all.

In conclusion, comrades, the crisis in the capitalist camp, the reacession, unemployment, the high interest rates, crime and mass agitations by working people against their inhuman condition pose such a threat to peace and progress that we must unite more today than ever before. We, the heirs of Marx and Lenin must recognise our historic role in the interests of posterity and mankind.

DR CHIAKA ANOZIE, Chairman Central Committee, Socialist Party of Working People, Nigeria:

One has only to stand near any church building or mosque on a Friday or Sunday to realize the influence religion of all hues still has on the people.

As Marxists we realize the interplay between the religious superstructure and the economic base. But here the economic base is increasingly manifesting itself. From the lesson of everyday life and without any kind of attack on religion by us, the faithful are becoming aware of the contradiction between religious platitudes and the state of society. They are now aware of the contradiction between the religious doctrine on equality, social justice and greed, and the dubiously acquired affluence of the pillars of society who are all for religion. To the promise of a better life after death we humbly add the necessity for the conscious effort of the oppressed to eradicate exploitation so as to ensure an equitable relation with our neighbour here on earth.

It is all there in the bible.

To the rest of the postulations we simply point to the present state of affairs. During the heyday of the oil boom everybody could swear that they were correct.

Today everybody is asking us "where are the Socialists"? Unfortunately we have to build up our party under the conditions of the legacy of colonialism and presently of neocolonialism, we have still to eliminate the reflected influence of bourgeois society and ethnicity in our ranks.

All these notwithstanding, we dedicate ourselves to the mastering of the essence of scientific socialism. This entails the identification and taking into account the characteristics of the forces in combat. That is to know our friends and our enemies on a stage to stage basis. We must also integrate the struggle in Nigeria with the struggle on our continent.

In all this one thing is clear. The Nigerian exploiting classes are coming to a dead end.

So as to avoid tailing behind the social revolution which is maturing fast, it is absolutely necessary to take timely decisions. The Marxist-Leninist party which is still illegal must make a determined effort to bring into being a platform capable of uniting all the forces that can be united.

The achievement of this goal will constitute a good augury for the advance of scientific socialism in Nigeria.

JACOB M. KENA, General Secretary, Communist Party of Lesotho:

The experience of Cuba and other socialist countries has confirmed that it is only by full participation of the masses that a revolution can be able to defend itself. In Lesotho the intervention by racist South Africa can be defeated by a programme of National Democracy capable of uniting all anti-imperialist forces.

Our party's main task is to work for a united democratic front with a non-capitalist economic basis.

Our party fully supports the progressive foreign policy of Chief Leabua's government. At the same time we have not hesitated to point out that the undemocratic and unpopular economic policy of the Lesotho government is a serious contradiction and a hindrance to the unity of the progressive forces of our country.

Our region is experiencing the most difficult period. Having lost the dominant position in the countries of southern Africa, imperialism is now regrouping and counter-attacking. The progressive countries of southern Africa need support to resist international imperialism.

The imperialists are making a noise about what they call the presence of Cuban troops in Angola. The presence of Cuban troops in Angola does not in any way hinder the process of liberation in southern Africa.

It is the socialist countries that have given us support during our struggle against colonialism, against the same imperialists who are now posing as guardians of our interests. What we need now, is not the withdrawal of Cubans, but more Cubans to help consolidate our national independence.

What the people of our region need and what they demand is not the withdrawal of Cuban troops but the withdrawal of the imperialist powers' military, economic and political support to the racists in Pretoria, the murderers of our women and children. The imperialists would like to create animosity between the socialist countries and the national liberation movement and thus isolate us from our natural allies. We reject this.

ATO AUSTIN, Secretary for Information of the Provisional National Defence Council, Ghana:

The participation of a government delegation from Ghana in this conference is an expression of Ghana's appreciation of the impact of Marxist-Leninist teachings on the liberation struggles on the African continent and other parts of the world.

The experiences of post-colonial countries teach that no true freedom and democracy have been attained in any post-colonial country which bases its development strategy on bourgeois ideology. They have only transcended from colonialism into direct neo-colonialism and then degenerated furthermore into new fascism.

This is the lesson which we the people of Ghana have learnt throughout the course of our twenty-five years of political independence.

As you may no doubt be aware, on the 31st of December, 1981, the people of Ghana, under the leadership of Flight-Lieutenant Rawlings, initiated a process aimed at qualitiatively transforming our society. This process, we believe, will inevitably lead to the elimination of all forms of exploitation and oppression.

Ours has been a relatively young revolution but we have set ourselves the task of establishing a genuine people's democracy. We do not yet possess a mature political party. Our economy is still neo-colonial basically, which is protected by a state machinery yet to be qualitatively transformed. The full potential of our working class and peasantry is still to be fully mobilised.

Faced with these initial practical problems, our revolutionary government has allowed the establishment of People's Defence Committees as the focal points of mobilising the people to consolidate the National Democratic phase of our revolution.

However, the Defence Committees at this stage are still diffuse and amorphous — a situation which renders the ongoing revolutionary transformation easily vulnerable to imperialist intrigues and sabotage.

In the face of this global imperialist offensive, the need for progressive forces and working class movements the world over to strengthen their unity and internationalist solidarity cannot be over-emphasised. This unity should be recognised by all as the means for containing imperialist designs and aggression and safeguarding world peace.

It is in this context that the Government of Ghana has recently reorganised the Ghanaian Branch of the World Peace Council. And the Council today enjoys the full support of government in their international campaigns for peace and is in the forefront of the peace movement in Ghana.

Comrades, today, as we remember the outstanding contribution of Karl Marx to the knowledge and upliftment of mankind, we do so in the full realisation that in the face of moribund capitalism which, in its death throes, seeks to bring everything else down with it into the 'marsh' as Lenin calls their fate, the working people of the world find themselves increasingly bound to one destiny. In the search for peace, we find now more than ever the urgency of Marx's call to all workers of all nations to unite.

MOSES NNAUYE, Secretary of the National Executive Committee and Leader of the division on party organisation of Chama Cha Mapinduzi, Tanzania:

We would like first of all to convey the warm fraternal greetings of Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, Chairman of Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), the Party and people of the United Republic of Tanzania to Comrade Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), the Party and people of the German Democratic Republic.

Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere would have liked to be personally present here among us but could not do so due to unavoidable circumstances.

The teachings of Karl Marx indeed opened a new era — a new page — in the history of mankind, for the working people — the proletariat — to take up their destiny in their own hands because "they have nothing to lose but their chains". Through Karl Marx, the working class of the world has been placed in a better position to fulfil its responsibility of freeing itself from the bondages of oppression and exploitation of man by man in the economic, social, cultural and political spheres.

In Africa, like in many parts of the world, the influence of Karl Marx's thoughts and ideas is there. At this point let us make a direct reference to Tanzania. Our country has clearly stated its objective of building a society on the basis of socialism and self-reliance. The Party Constitution of 1982, Preamble Paragraph Three, spells out among other things that

> "We have unanimously resolved to establish a new Party for carrying forward the socialist revolution in Tanzania and the struggle for the liberation of Africa...
>
> The Party we are establishing will be a strong instrument organizationally, resolute in ideology and in its revolutionary actions designed to annihilate all forms and manifestations of exploitation of man by man...
>
> It is our intention that the Party we are establishing shall have complete and supreme authority over all public affairs so as to safeguard and further the authentic interests of the workers and peasants.
>
> We intend that the Party we are establishing shall be the bridge to link Tanzanian revolutionaries to our compatriots and fellow-revolutionaries wherever they may be in the world."

Comrade Chairman, the socialist system of our world today has been the formidable bastion and guarantor of peace in the world as opposed to the ever-increasing aggressiveness of imperialism — whose true nature is subjugation and exploitation of the working people and nations.

Karl Marx is the outstanding figure of the German people, the worthy son of the working class of the world. The German people can be proud to have produced such an outstanding and genius scholar. The best way to honour and respect such an outstanding personality is to put into implementation his teachings and all that he devoted his life to. The German Democratic Republic not only embraced Marxism, but has established since 1949 a workers' and peasants' state on German soil and is successfully constructing a highly developed socialist society under the leadership of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED). The exemplary developmental achievements in the German Democratic Republic are a great source of encouragement and inspiration for many countries in the world, especially to us in Tanzania.

EDWARD MANGONI LISO, member of the Central Committee of the United National Independence Party, Zambia:

On behalf of the United National Independence Party, the government and the people of Zambia, and indeed on my own behalf, I wish to convey fraternal greetings and congratulations to the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, under the esteemed and revolutionary leader, Comrade Erich Honecker, and the people of the German Democratic Republic on this asupicious occasion of the International Scientific Conference in honour of Karl Marx.

Comrades, we are meeting here as some of the world's leading progressive and revolutionary forces in order to express our solidarity with the working class thoughout the world. We are doing so in the strong belief that every revolutionary struggle has both allies and enemies. This, therefore, means that the success of our struggle will mainly depend on the strength of the bond of solidarity that exists among all the revolutionaries and progressives throughout the world. In other words, we must recognize the fact that the struggle of the working class against capitalism and its attendant evils of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, Zionism and apartheid: their struggle to be masters of their own destiny, are dialectically connected with the struggles of the peasants and progressive intellectuals elsewhere in the world. The successes or failures of revolutionary and progressive forces in one part of the world, in one way or another, affect the performance and prospect of similar struggles elesewhere.

It is true to say that Karl Marx's ideas have had a profound impact on the entire peace of the world. This is evidenced by the triumph of socialist revolutions in the world, and the victory of national liberation movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America: the growth of revolutionary action of the working class for their rights and social progress in both developed and less developed capitalist countries. In addition, certain historic processes and memorable events are taking place throughout the world and these include, among others, the continuing struggle of the people for peace and security in the world, the growth and consolidation of anti-imperialism in all parts of the world. These could be some of mankind's impressive achievements.

Karl Marx's teaching on the historic role of the working class as the creator of the socialist society, has become the accepted doctrine for countless millions of progressives and revolutionaries throughout the world. His theory of the development of society as analysed by Marx did not spring from an abstract statement of wishes. Marx discovered the objective laws of development of nature and society.

DAVID H. MERORO, National Chairman of the South West Africa People's Organisation:

The concept of the indissoluble bond between the anti-imperialist task of the national liberation movement and that of socialist revolution, which contemporary revolutionaries take for granted, can be traced to the work of Marx and Engels at the end of the 1840's.

Thanks to the tremendous growth of world socialism, several of the newly liberated countries in Asia and Africa have taken the road of socialist orientation. Some others are proceeding directly with socialist construction, by-passing the exploitative capitalist formation in an eloquent confirmation of the Marxist-Leninist classics. In the Americas, too, the beacon of socialism has been lit when Cuba joined the socialist community.

The experiences of these countries are providing illuminating insights and methodological reference to the movement for national liberation in Namibia; and today the patriots and revolutionary democrats of our country, led by SWAPO, are showing considerable interest in Marxist science. They are searching for theoretical and practical guidance regarding the problem of national liberation revolutions in our epoch, of their socio-economic, political and ideological features, and their chief motive forces. Namibian patriots and revolutionary democrats are deeply concerned with the urgent theoretical and practical matters, such as the probable course of the class struggle in our country and continent as well as with the lines of social development, not only in the present stage of our national struggle, but also in the historical period immediately ahead.

In particular, our vanguard national liberation movement realizes today the need for an on-going discussion on socialist ideas and their application to the African conditions. Such discussion tries to focus attention on the complicated processes and stages of the African revolution. Of immediate concern to SWAPO is the revolutionary stage of non-capitalist development. The socio-economic and political platform of the non-capitalist stage of the national liberation revolution is national democracy. It is, in our view, a necessary transitional stage in a situation where the proletariat is still both numerically and organizationally too weak to assume the leading role of the revolutionary struggle. Experience elsewhere has clearly shown that when invested with a Marxist ideological perspective, the national democratic state could, indeed, advance the national liberation revolution to new heights in the direction of socialism by consciously striving to create the material and social pre-condition for socialist construction. This entails the following steps: doing away with the domination of foreign capital, seeking to strengthen the country's political and economic independence, giving the state a leading role in the economic activity of the country, guaranteeing broad democratic rights and freedom to the people and ensuring actual participation of the broad masses in the discussions of draft development plans, introducing agrarian reform and improving the living standards of the people. In addition, many a national democratic state, following a path of socialist orientation, prohibits exploiters from holding leading posts in the state apparatus while at the same time drawing into the state bodies people from the labouring sections of the population.

Such is the enriching experience against which background the Namibian national liberation revolution is unfolding. And it is in this light that we in SWAPO hold the conviction that a scope exists in our movement for national liberation, for the assimilation and dissemination of the tenets of Marxism-Leninism towards the transformation of the movement into a socialist vanguard party.

E. T. KAMARA, National Administrative Secretary and member of the Executive of the All-People's Congress of the Republic of Sierra Leone:

It is with exceptional pride and privilege that I wish first of all to express my deep gratitude and appreciation on behalf of His Excellency, Comrade Dr. Siaka Stevens — Leader and Secretary General of the All People's Congress of the Republic of Sierra Leone, for the kind invitation extended to us by the First Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party of the German Democratic Republic — Comrade Erich Honecker.

The revolutionary doctrine which became known as "Marxist-Leninist philosophy" which was so ably propounded by the great German thinker of the 19th century — Karl Marx — has proved, through historical and political developments, an indispensable weapon of the oppressed, exploited and colonized masses in their struggle for independence and social progress, against imperialist monopoly capitalist exploitation. The test and success of Marxist-Leninist philosophy in the practice of scientific socialism in what was then Tsarist Russia, which has transformed Russia into a powerful nation, has proved the scientific content and value of Karl Marx's teachings.

Under the teachings of scientific socialism the Great October Socialist Revolution was born, which ignited the revolutionary flame for the people's struggle against imperialism and all its manifestations. The people of Eastern Europe after years of foreign rule that was characterized by fascist dictatorship, exploitation and degradation, after the heroic victory over Hitlerite fascism, embarked upon the revolutionary course of constructing a new society devoid of exploitation of man by man, social inequality and injustice. Thus armed with the revolutionary and scientific teachings of Marxism-Leninism, humanity witnessed the emergence of people's democracies in Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, the GDR and Yugoslavia.

Undoubtedly, the birth of the socialist states in Europe which was complemented by the birth of the People's Republic of China in Asia have all profoundly altered the political map of the world in favour of the working class and National Liberation Movements.

The National Liberation Movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America, after gaining political freedom and independence, are presently restructuring and transforming their age-old colonial dominion into a socialist-oriented society through the guidance of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Socialist Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique — only to name a few — have together with the socialist states tilted the balance of forces in favour of the forces of peace, progress and socialism.

In Africa today, as in other continents, one cannot talk about peace and social progress without analyzing its anti-imperialist posture. Hence the struggle for peace and social progress pre-supposes a struggle against neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid and imperialist war of attrition.

Another aspect in the endeavours for social progress, is the element of anti-imperialist solidarity. The disinterested support and solidarity of the socialist countries, notably the Soviet Union, to third-world countries is very significant and worthy of commendation. The frontline states of Africa, particularly Angola, Mozambique and Botswana which are victims of continual South African aggression, need an increased and sustained support and solidarity. At this juncture, I wish to seize this opportunity to express our support for, and solidarity with, our struggling compatriots of the Middle East, El Salvador, Namibia, South Africa, Western Sahara, Korea and all those engaged in the anti-imperialist struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

ROBERTO DE ALMEIDA, Secretary of the Central Committee of the MPLA Workers' Party of Angola

The People's Republic of Angola is a peaceful state, with no interest in war. Therefore it has made its contribution to a negotiated settlement of the problem of Namibia through the United Nations or the Contact Group. For this reason it had discussions with South Africa and is interested in persevering with discussions with a view to securing the withdrawal of South African troops from Angolan territory and the achievement of a ceasefire between the two sides engaged in the Namibian conflict — SWAPO and the South African regime.

This policy of peace does not contradict the expression, on our part, of solidarity with the Namibian people struggling for peace and with their sole and legitimate representative SWAPO. The MPLA Workers' Party, the People's Republic of Angola and the Angolan people will not exchange this solidarity for a peace that does not contribute to a just solution of the Namibian problem.

In the name of the Angolan people, who carry the main burden of support for the Namibian people and which is the principal victim of South African aggression against the frontline states, the MPLA Workers' Party calls upon the international community and all peaceful and responsible forces to redouble solidarity with the struggle of the Namibian people and the frontline states and initiate actions to curb the imperialist policies of military, diplomatic and economic support for racist South Africa. The struggle against colonialism and racism and for peace are internationalist duties of the whole of humanity.

In spite of the aggressive policies of the Republic of South Africa, the struggle for social progress is the order of the day in the southern region of the African continent. This is exemplified by the formation of SADCC.

The collapse of the Portuguese colonial system and the formation of people's democratic states in Angola and Mozambique gave a big impulse not only to the fight against colonialism and racism, but also to the struggle for economic independence in the region. The democratic and popular revolution whose fundamental content is the struggle for economic independence, the democratisation of social life and the creation of the conditions for the transition to socialism, is a reality with a significance which transcends the region and is a further confirmation of the vision of Marx and Engels (later put into theory by Lenin) of the possibilities for dependent and undeveloped countries to pass to socialism avoiding the capitalist phase of development.

Angola, a country which inherited a heavy legacy of colonialism and is the victim of an undeclared war carried out by the colonial and racist South African regime, has become firmly engaged in the tasks of the democratic and popular revolution. Some successes have already been obtained in the construction of an independent economy, in the formation of a new consciousness and in the democratisation of social and political life. The state sector of the economy was created. Important advances have been achieved by the introduction of co-operatives in agriculture. Education and medical care are free and the literacy campaign has taught more than 800,000 Angolans to read and write. Tribal, regional and racist ideas are losing ground and a patriotic and revolutionary consciousness is asserting itself. At provincial and national levels people's representative organs are being formed and trade unions will be formed in each branch of work.

The driving force of these revolutionary transformations is our party, the MPLA Workers' Party, a party which is guided by the Marxist-Leninist theory, a party composed mainly of workers, a party which is the result of the progressive development of the MPLA, an organisation which under the direction of our late comrade President Antonio Agostinho Neto led the Angolan people in the struggle for national independence and for the creation of the foundations of the democratic and popular revolution, the route to socialism. The increase in its ranks, inititated this year, the weeding out of harmful elements, the strengthening in more organised and scientific forms of the ideological education of members and the implementation of ambitious programmes in the sphere of cadre formation are factors which will contribute to more active and effective work of the masses in order to reinforce the leading role of the party and to deepen the revolution.

The successes of the Angolan revolution are linked with the solidarity and inestimable support of the socialist countries, in the first place of the Soviet Union and the republic of Cuba. This internationalist policy will continue to be an indispensable condition for our future success.

The MPLA Workers' Party and the Angolan people are aware of the weaknesses that exist in the revolutionary process and of much that still has to be done to carry the popular democratic revolution to a successful conclusion, particularly in the sphere of production, the control of private commerce, support for the peasants, the cultural revolution and the direction of the socio-economic processes at various levels.

In order to be able to resolve these and other important tasks of the revolution, the people need peace — peace so that it is possible to dedicate themselves entirely to creative work, to the construction of an independent and more just life. The construction of a socialist society on Angolan soil will be the best homage by our people to Karl Marx, the immortal thinker, founder of the most revolutionary and humanist doctrine of all time, teacher and leader of the international working class.

AFRICAN PARTIES:

Other African parties represented at the conference included the Egyptian Communist Party; the United National Progressive Party of Egypt; the National Liberation Front of Algeria; The Commission for the Organisation of a Workers' Party (COPWE) of Ethiopia; The People's Revolutionary Party of Benin; the Party of Unity and National Progress of Burundi; the African Independence Party of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC); the Democratic Party of Guinea; the African Independence Party of Cape Verde (PAICV); the Congolese Party of Labour; the Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution, Madagascar; the Party of Independence Congresses of Madagascar; the Party of Progress and Socialism (Ali Yata) of Morocco; the Communist Party of Reunion; the Liberation Movement of Sao Tome and Principe; the Party of Independence and Labour of Senegal; the Progressive People's Front of the Seychelles; the Sudan Communist Party; the Communist Party of Tunisia.

BOTHA'S "TOTAL STRATEGY"

Crisis Management in South Africa

by T. Sifunasonke

Over the last decade or so the South African ruling circles have been forced to introduce measures over a wide front to restructure the apartheid system. The totality of changes and adjustments in the economic, political, ideological and repressive dynamics of the system has come to be termed "total strategy".

Since its first elaboration the essential nature of the "total strategy" doctrine has been a matter of debate within and outside South Africa; between opponents and apologists of the racist regime. Reform or greater repression? Real or cosmetic changes? Tactical retreat or strategic shift? The beginning of a process of deracialisation of the system or the end of limited concessions to the oppressed?

However "total strategy" is characterised, one thing is imperative for the liberation movement: the need to analyse, as precisely as possible, why it emerged, what it entails and what its main objectives are.

"Total strategy" was first outlined in the Defence White Paper of 1977 when P.W. Botha was Minister of Defence. It was defined as:

> "...the comprehensive plan to utilise all the means available to a state according to an integrated pattern in order to achieve the national aims... A total national strategy is, therefore, not confined to a particular sphere, but is applicable to all levels and to all the functions of the state structure."[1]

The "national aims" referred to have been variously defined as safeguarding South Africa from "Marxist-inspired insurgency" and the "threat of foreign invasion". At other times the emphasis has been on "saving the nation" and securing the basis of "the free enterprise system".

The levels at which the strategy was to operate were to be all-embracing. As Magnus Malan, the regime's Defence Minister, spelled out:

> "Total Strategy should encompass the state, the private sector, diplomacy, commerce, industry and organisations like Armscor, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CISR), and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)."[2]

At the same time the strategy was designed to cope with, if not resolve, the many conflicts generated by the apartheid system by means of an integrated system of response:

> "The resolution of a conflict in the times in which we live demands interdependent and coordinated actions in all fields — military, psychological, economic, political, sociological, cultural..."[3]

The wider and more sinister foreign policy implications of "total strategy" were specified by M.H. Louw, a former director of the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSUP) of Pretoria University:

> "National Security Doctrine is a triology of foreign policy, military policy and domestic policy... We must mobilise through its mechanisms and resources a capability (power, leverage or violence) for effective resistance... this means a capacity to withstand challenges to our own territorial integrity and political and socio-economic order *as well as to exert pressure on other, mostly weaker states, to make their behaviour consonant with our interests.*" (our emphasis)[4]

At the level of description, therefore, "total strategy", as defined by its main proponents, implied a restructuring of the state and a re-definition of its relationship with the political, economic, diplomatic, military and ideological structures of the apartheid system.

The essential context within which the "total strategy" doctrine emerged, however, was a deep-going crisis which had penetrated the political, economic and ideological spheres. A year after becoming Prime Minister, P.W. Botha summarised the crisis-ridden nature of "the times in which we live" and the imperatives for change:

"We must adapt or we will die."[5]

It is the character and scope of the series of crises which developed during different periods and converged during the latter half of the 1970s which provides the *raison d'etre* for the adoption of "total strategy". Both internal and international factors and forces have fuelled the present crisis.

The politics of the crisis

The immediate roots of the crisis are to be found in the changed balance of forces in southern Africa as a result of the stunning armed victories of the peoples of Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe and the commitment of these and other frontline states to the completion of the southern African revolution. This, together with the escalating drive for genuine independence by SWAPO and the people of Namibia, has had the effect of depriving the South African regime of "buffer zones" within which to encapsulate the conflict between oppressor and oppressed. It has meant a critical diversion of men, machines and money in an attempt to bludgeon SWAPO and the frontline states into submission to white domination. It has resulted in internationalising the conflict beyond the borders of South Africa.

But it is within South Africa itself that the challenge to the whole racist-exploitative system is at its most sustained. Soweto provided the spark to the ever-widening and sharp confrontation between the oppressed and exploited black majority and the white supremacist system. The growing strength, stature and success of the challenge spearheaded by the revolutionary alliance between the ANC and the Communist Party provide the essential reason for the programme of "crisis-management" by the South African ruling circles.

Three components of the revolutionary challenge to the apartheid system are worth isolating — working class militancy, the mass-based civil movement of opposition and the ANC-led revolutionary alliance.

The working class struggles

Commencing with the dockworkers' strike in Durban towards the end of 1972 a sustained wave of strikes, work stoppages and struggles for genuine trade union rights by black workers has been rocking the apartheid edifice. Between 1973 and 1976 it has been officially estimated that more than 800 strikes and work stoppages occurred involving hundreds of thousands of black workers. At the height of the Soweto uprisings three major general political strikes involving a quarter of a million workers were organised bringing to the fore the class-based power of the working people. Since then, worker militancy has continued unabated.

Important victories have been won. The right to belong to and form independent trade unions, though still hedged-in by a number of political, legal and administrative constraints imposed by the state, represents a milestone in the history of the black workers' struggles. The legalisation of independent African trade unions has opened up new avenues and possibilities of confronting the system, compounding thereby the crisis for both the capitalist class and the state.

Far from diminishing working class militancy, it has imparted a further impetus to the class struggle. The number of *recorded* strikes (by no means a reliable figure) by August 1982 showed a significant increase over 1981 — 182 strikes involving over 51,000 workers as against 111 strikes involving 30,000 workers.[6] This figure however, does not take into account strikes by the non-registered unions. The *Financial Mail,* using government sources, places the number of strikes in 1981 at about 342.[7]

The growing attempts to forge solidarity between and among the established and emerging unions and their national federations will undoubtedly strengthen the working class movement as a whole and consolidate its position as the most decisive force in the struggle for national and social emancipation.

The Mass Movement

The mass upsurge since the events of Soweto has grown spectacularly and is expressing itself in many forms and terrains of confrontation against white supremacy rule. It has taken more or less permanent organisational forms from civic to youth, women, students and media workers, at local, regional and national levels. Despite attempts by the regime to divide the people along ethnic and racial lines, there has been growing unity and solidarity among the oppressed. Two events in the recent past point to the strength of the mass movement. The first was the mass boycott of the Republic Day festival organised by the regime in 1981 to celebrate 20 years of the white Republic. The slogan "People's Republic, not White Republic" encapsulates the mass response to white domination. There have been very few moments in South Africa's history in which unity in purpose and action across such a wide spectrum of the oppressed, reinforced by democratic white opposition, expressed itself so effectively against the white supremacist state.

The second was the overwhelming success of the anti-SAIC (South African Indian Council) Conference in 1982. This brough together on the same platform workers' representatives, community, youth, women and student leaders from all sections of the oppressed in various parts of the country. The conference rejected the SAIC and all other dummy organisations imposed on the black majority by the regime, and issued a declaration which echoed the substance of the Freedom Charter's demands.

Most significant from a revolutionary perspective is the identification of the workers and mass civil movement with the aims of the ANC-led revolutionary alliance. Resistance against forced removals, strikes against increases in rents, fares and prices of basic goods and services, boycott of regime-imposed institutions and the creation of community based opposition organisations — all these actions have developed alongside the movement in support of the demands of the Freedom Charter; the committees for the protection of political prisoners from abuse and torture; the movement for the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners; support and solidarity for ANC freedom fighters arrested and those facing the death sentence; the organised opposition by trade unionists and civic organisations against the harassment, detention and torture of trade union organisers, and the increasing cooperation between workers and the community as witnessed by the red meat and white bread strikes and boycott.

The revolutionary alliance

The convergence of aims between the mass movement of the people and the revolutionary alliance headed by the ANC is the bedrock of the strategy for the armed seizure of political power. This is what Nelson Mandela had in mind when he wrote in a letter smuggled out from Robben Island:

> "Between the anvil of mass struggle and the hammer blows of the armed revolution we will crush apartheid."

The prestige of the ANC among the people is at its highest in the movement's 70-year history. With this has been the spectacular growth in the number and scope of armed actions by Umkhonto we Sizwe — signals that the revolutionary alliance is succeeding in its strategic perspectives of linking with the mass movement, consolidating the underground and preparing for and launching armed actions against strategic targets. The presence of the ANC among the oppressed and exploited has forced the regime to admit that "the ANC is everywhere" and this has a significant bearing on heightening the people's revolutionary consciousness.

It is this growing and sustained challenge to white domination in all its forms inside South Africa which is the essence of the crisis of legitimacy faced by the apartheid regime and which provides the most fundamental reason for its "adapt or die" posture and for the "total strategy" programme.

The economics of the crisis

The political crisis of apartheid is aggravated by the economic crisis which has gripped the economy since the mid-1970s.

By the time of the Soweto uprising a crisis in the economy was already under way signalled by persistent balance of payments deficits, a declining growth rate in the gross domestic product, rising inflation and unemployment, especially among black workers. The rise in the gross domestic product (GDP) plummeted from 9.6% in 1970 to 1.4% in 1976[8] and was less than 1% by 1982.[9]

By the end of 1982 the balance of payments deficit stood at 5.4 billion rand and the consumer price index had risen to a record 16.5% in the 12-month period to the end of April, 1982.[10] This represented the highest inflation rate since the 1920's affecting prices in basic necessities such as meat, bread, milk, rents, fuel and transport.

In all the major areas of the economy — textiles, metal and steel, automobile, chemical and transport and building — retrenchment, redundancies and lay-offs have been steadily increasing. The result has been a huge escalation in the numbers of black unemployed. It has been estimated that by the end of 1982 unemployment among black workers stood at 3 million — more than 20% of the economically active black workforce.[11]

Among small and medium-sized enterprises bankruptcies and closures have become endemic during this period. Insolvencies and liquidations during 1982 were running at some 200 companies a month and by the end of the year nearly 350 companies faced closure.[12] Nevertheless, a striking feature of the current crisis has been the ability of monopoly capitalism in South Africa to increase profits and expansion. In the tax year ending in 1981, for example, the top twenty companies increased their assets by 25% market capitalisation by 13% and equity funds by 22%. Incomes increased by 32% and profits, after tax, by 43%.[13]

The general decline in the South African economy reflects, in part, the general crisis afflicting the world capitalist system of which it is an integral part. The effects of the latter on the South African economy, however, are contradictory. For one thing, economic slump in the world capitalist economies generally results in an increase in the price of gold — an obvious benefit to the South African economy.

On the other hand, fresh foreign investment, particularly in the manufacturing sectors, has been steadily declining. The effect has been lower output and export capacity, which are crucial to the country's balance of payments. This in turn has forced the regime, the para-statals and business in general to rely more heavily on foreign loans. Since 1979, for example, loans amounting to 2,756 million dollars have been raised in the capitalist countries to fund the South African economy.[14] The latest 1,200 million dollar loan by the IMF to the regime is another case in point. However, loans, and the interest on them, have to be repaid at some time, and it has been estimated that repayments will have to be continuous throughout the 1980's — adding greater strains on the economy and the balance of payments.

The apartheid system has experienced crises before. What makes the present crisis particularly sharp and unique is the conjuncture of political, economic and ideological factors demanding measures by the state and ruling class to manage, contain and defuse it before it destroys the very foundations of the system as a whole.

It is in this context that the "total strategy" policy began to emerge.

The dynamics of the "total strategy"

Although "total strategy" has been projected as an integrated policy, it is necessary to isolate its various components. It should be pointed out that every element within the policy is not new. The increasing militarisation of the South African state, the Bantustan programme and the "constellation of states" notion were already set in motion before Botha came into power. There had been previous attempts at controlling the militancy of the black working class (works committees) and in drawing the Coloured and Indian people into the white dominated political process (the Coloured Representative and Indian Councils). "Petty apartheid" restrictions were already in the process of being lifted, and the job reservation policy had more or less collapsed in the face of the growing demands by the modern sectors of the economy for more skilled and semi-skilled labour. Besides some new elements, the new policy draws together these previous strands in ways which attempt to give credence to them as "a change in direction" and as "the end of the exclusive white rule in South Africa". These claims are being echoed by the apologists and international allies of the regime.

Monopoly capital

Although the Botha policies appeared primarily as the initiative from the military, they soon gained support from influential sections of monopoly capitalism, by the 1970's already the most dominant feature of South

African capitalism. A year after coming into power Botha was acclaimed "Man of the Year" by the *Financial Mail*, the organ of big business, for his "driving resolve. . . to move away from the narrow, sectarian approach which has characterised the regimes of other National Party Prime Ministers."[15] Representatives of monopoly capitalism participate in a number of decision and policy-making cabinet committees set up by the Botha regime. Differences between the military and the monopoly bourgeoisie lie not in the *changes* being introduced, but the *pace* at which these are being undertaken. The basis of the alliance between the military and monopoly capitalism is to be found in the constraints, political and economic, imposed by the apartheid system.

For one thing, capital requires for its profitability and maintenance a stable political society. South Africa's rulers are threatened by the mass political upsurge and the increasing turn towards a revolutionary solution. Secondly, the dominance of monopoly capital poses two serious problems for the capitalist class as well as the state. A modern economy relies increasingly on technical and technological inputs in the production process. Thus the need for semi-skilled and skilled labour, in place of unskilled labour, becomes a fundamental necessity. At the level of state policy, therefore, this requires provision for a stable and trained labour force with avenues for the acquisition of educational and industrial skills — precisely what the apartheid system was designed to prevent with its job reservation and Bantu Education programmes.

On the other hand, the growing reliance of capital-intensive productive factors leads inevitably to unemployment in a capitalist formation. Control of the now vast army of unemployed in South Africa is as much a concern of the state as it is of the monopoly bourgeoisie. The acceleration of the Bantustan programme is designed to meet this crisis as much as to defuse the drive for national liberation. Control of the millions of workless, the disabled and the aged has been delegated to the Bantustan puppets.

The revival of the "constellation of states" programme by the Botha regime is inspired by the overriding demand of capital to expand. Given the woefully low income levels of the black majority in the country and the opposition to the apartheid system by the majority of independent African states, the obstacles to the expansion by monopoly capital of its basis of operations are serious and demand political solutions. The Botha regime has repeatedly tried to entice African states with the lure of capital, technical and other aid forms as a means of undermining their support for the freedom struggles in South Africa and Namibia.

The Trade Union movement

An essential part of the "total strategy" programme has been aimed at dealing with the rising tide of working class militancy, and the demands of monopoly capitalism for a more stable and skilled black work force. This need has been aggravated by the fact that the vast majority (estimated at over 80%) of white workers are employed in the state sector and in supervisory and technical aspects of the production process. The combination of these factors forced the Botha regime into conceding trade union rights to black workers for the first time. At the same time job reservation has now been formally abandoned.

These measures have not led to any improvement in the real earnings of black workers, a fact which accounts, in a large measure, for the increasing tide of strikes. On the other hand the regime and bosses have attempted to introduce tighter measures of control over the trade unions through legislative and administrative means. A significant effect of the continuing battles of the black trade unions has been to break down these barriers to real independence and genuine free collective bargaining without state interference.

The other side of the state's strategy in this respect is to prevent the linking of the workers' struggles with the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the white supremacist state. That is, to de-politicise the workers' movement and so drive it into reformist channels. Whilst the right to organise, form and belong to trade unions of a worker's choice has opened up new possibilities of confrontation and mobilisation for black workers, the supreme task of organising the workers for the revolutionary overthrow of the entire racist-capitalist system is a strategic task facing the Communist Party, the ANC and SACTU. The state, as we noted above, has stepped up its repression of worker-militants precisely because of the fear of such linkage.

The black petty bourgeoisie

"Total strategy" is equally concerned with encouraging the development of a black petty bourgeoisie through an extension of economic opportunities and limited political power in the urban areas and the Bantustans. In line with previous attempts the Botha regime has stepped up the process of creating an extended material base for this section of the black communities. Within the urban areas steps have been taken to extend the rights and opportunities of black business people. Africans can now own more than one business and have the right to open wholesale enterprises.

Credit facilities have been extended and mixed white and black commercial interests in the urban areas for blacks are now allowed. Property ownership in the form of 99 year leaseholds is being offered and the establishment of banks for the development of black enterprises has already begun.

With such commercial rights and opportunities have come political powers through the Urban Bantu Councils, which are partly empowered to deal with housing allocation, rent control, electrification and housing and educational schemes.

What the Botha-Malan strategy envisages is that the class of African, Coloured and Indian business people will act as a counter political force to the revolutionary alliance, because of their increasing material stake in society. To date, however, this has not happened. Indeed, the collaboration element within this section has come under growing criticism and rejection from the popular forces as witnessed by the boycott campaigns and the creation of alternative urban organisations which are supported by the masses.

The state and the white power bloc

The most striking feature of the white-dominated political process at the moment is the dominance of the military in the decisive decision and policy-making organs of the state. At the heart of this is the National Security Council (NSC) which functions as the planning and executive arm of the Botha regime. Its function, spelled out in the 1977 Defence White Paper, and subsequently adopted by the present regime, is to

> "advise the government regarding the formulation of national policy and strategy in connection with the security of the Republic, the manner in which the policy and strategy must be carried out, and a policy to combat any threat against the security of the Republic..."[16]

Much of the activity and policy of the all-white parliament has in fact been delegated to the NSC — political, military, para-military, economic, scientific and technological with special emphasis on security, intelligence, manpower planning, transport and distribution and telecommunications.

In short, the planning and implementation of "total strategy" is the special responsibility of the NSC.

Of the nine membrs making up the NSC only the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Police have not come from the military establishment. Concomitant with this has been the drastic trimming down of the state apparatus from 40 departments to 18. Real power, however, has been delegated to some 14 cabinet committees all falling under the direction of the NSC.

This drastic restructuring and transformation of the South African state into a virtual military-style dictatorship lies at the heart of the "total strategy" programme.

The aspect of "total strategy" which has been the most highly acclaimed by the regime's supporters internationally, but has resulted in further divisions within the National Party, is the proposed "power sharing" scheme through separate parliaments for whites, coloureds and indians with a multi-racial but white dominated Cabinet. The new arrangement will continue to entrench white power and the rule of the National Party in particular. Opposition from the more right-wing sections of the NP crytallised around Dr Andries Treurnicht, who, together with a number of other members of parliament, resigned from the party and formed the Conservative Party.

Such political divisions as now exist among the Afrikaner people reflect changing class alliances among them. In the past, the NP united a broad class alliance among the Afrikaners — workers, small and big capitalist farmers, the middle strata and the industrial, finance and mining capitalists. The party is now closely identified with the political and economic interests of monopoly capitalism in general, and the Afrikaner monopoly bourgeoisie in particular. The "Volk", it is claimed, has now been abandoned by the Botha-Malan faction of the party in favour of big business.

Whilst these political divisions along class lines further aggravate the political crisis for the ruling class, none of the proposed changes envisaged under "total strategy" affect the dominant position and privileges of the white minority, or the interests of monopoly capital in general. This latter conclusion is reinforced by the operation of the other side of the "total strategy" doctrine — the increasing violence of the state against all opposition.

The violence of "total strategy"

Both the "new political dispensation" and the extension of trade union rights have been acclaimed by apologists of the racist regime as significant concessions "in the right direction", but what has certainly not changed is the repressive machinery for the maintenance of race-class rule in South Africa. Indeed, the opposite is true: "total strategy", in practice, has seen an escalation of violence against all opposition in South Africa and Namibia, and an all-out war of aggression against the frontline states. The apartheid war machine has built up enormously over the last decade or so, and the regime's strike capability has been increased since the Botha-Malan assumption of power. In the period from 1961-1981 military expenditure (the main factor fuelling the balance of payments deficit) has sky-rocketed from 72 to 3000 million rand. The 1982 budget increased spending by 8%, and the 1983 budget by a further 15.9%. In the last two decades total military potential has grown from 79,000 to 515,000 men. The operational defence force has increased from 12,000 to 200,000 and the police force from 26,000 to 72,000 men during the same period.[17]

Internally, this war machine has been mobilised as never before against the ANC-led revolutionary alliance, against the workers and civic organisations, student, women and church leaders. Externally, the undeclared war against the frontline states has been stepped up.

"Total strategy" and imperialism

The new strategy cannot be seen in isolation from imperialism's role and designs in the southern African sub-continent. "Total strategy" converges with the critical demands of the transnational corporations and imperialism to maintain its profits and dominance over the region. The Reagan administration's "constructiv engagement" policy is a reflection of this objective. Acclaiming South Africa as "a country which has stood beside us in every war" and which "strategically is essential to the free world" the US administration has stepped up its collaboration with Pretoria. Thus HELIUM-3 (used in the production of thermo-nuclear weapons) and new computers and technology, used primarily for nuclear research and development, have recently been supplied to the racists. Fresh investments and loans have been announced for the apartheid economy as part of the new deal. Loans from the capitalist countries have increased since Botha announced his "total strategy" policy. Politically, imperialism, through the Gang of Five, has continued to hamper Namibia's independence, and the United States, France and Britain have vetoed attempts at the UN Security Council for comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the Pretoria racists. The revelation by the Johannesburg *Sunday Times* (11.04.1982) that South Africa was part of SATO (South Atlantic Treaty Organisation) and that this pact has already been in existence for the last 13 years, underlines the fact that "total strategy" is an integral part of imperialism's global strategy to maintain its hegemony over large parts of the world.

It is clear that the Pretoria regime, especially since P.W. Botha assumed power, has adopted both old and new measures in the political, economic, social and military spheres to maintain the system of race-class rule. These measures have been forced on the present regime by the sustained crises which have penetrated the system as a whole. They constitute, in short, a means of restructuring the mechanisms of national and class oppression of the black majority in the changed, and changing, conditions of the times.

In the long run, the transformation of the racist state into a virtual dictatorship of the military represents the line of first and last defence of the system.

For the revolutionary alliance and the oppressed there is only one answer to "total strategy" — mass mobilisation, mass organisation and a total war against the entire racist-exploitative system.

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THE O.A.U. AFTER 20 YEARS

By A. Ngungunyane

Twenty years after its foundation, the Organisation of African Unity is in the process of seeking solutions to problems which have, during the past twelve months, threatened its very existence as an organisation. These problems broke out into the open with the failure of the Organisation to hold its 19th Summit last year, ostensibly because of lack of agreement, first about the status of the Saharaoui Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) and, in the second instance, about the legitimacy or otherwise of the regime of Hissen Habre in Chad.

In the end, the matter assumed the form of a constitutional crisis, sparked off by the fact that twice it proved impossible to achieve a quorum which would enable the summit to convene. The decision to assemble the adjourned summit in Addis Ababa rather than in Tripoli, Libya, was taken in order to eliminate yet another potential problem, that of some African states objecting to President Maumar Khadafi succeeding to the chairmanship of the OAU.

Ten years ago, this journal carried an article to mark the first decade of the OAU. It was clear then, as it is now, that the OAU contains within it two contradictory historic tendencies which necessarily have a centrifugal impact on this organisation. The OAU has among its members countries whose governments seek a radical, anti-imperialist solution to the problems facing the peoples of Africa: it also has other members whose ruling circles have led their people into positions of neo-colonial dependence on imperialism.

Thus People's Mozambique, Angola and other progressive countries find themselves sharing a common membership of the OAU and in alliance with the feudal imperialist dependency of Morocco and the neo-colonial stronghold of Zaire. The question that the future will have to answer is whether this is an alliance or a marriage of convenience.

All the progressive forces and states on the African continent have been working to save the OAU from collapse. Yet life has posed the question — can the OAU survive in its present form?

The progressive forces of Africa are fighting to save the OAU because they see this organisation as a collective instrument for the continuation, the extension and further deepening of the anti-colonial struggle for national liberation.

They see it as confronted still with the task of uniting the peoples of Africa for the prosecution of the struggle for the independence of Namibia and the liberation of South Africa and the transfer of power into the hands of the peoples of these countries.

Progressive Africa wants to see the OAU strengthened as an instrument for the collective security of our continent which is permanently threatened with imperialist aggression, immediately by racist South Africa and Zionist Israel, but also by the United States and France which have placed land, air and marine forces on the African continent and its environs.

The progressive forces of our continent strive to ensure that the OAU should provide an effective machinery for the solution of inter-state disputes and especially to forestall settlement of such disputes by resort to arms. Thus the OAU would contribute to reduce inter-African antagonisms and help to reinforce conditions for an all-African unity againt the common imperialist enemy.

In the struggle to break the economic stranglehold of international monopoly capital, progressive Africa would like to see the continent present a united front and thus somewhat to transform the balance of strength, giving a greater possibility for the African countries, individually and collectively, to progress towards more independent economies. Once more, the OAU is the only vehicle available to unite and mobilise Africa for the attainment of this goal, as was demonstrated at the Lagos Economic Summit of the OAU in 1980.

Western Sahara

It was both ironic and symptomatic of the fundamental problems facing the OAU as an alliance of forces that it should have been threatened with extinction over the colonial question of Western Sahara. It was ironic because in fact the anti-colonial struggle had, for 19 years, been the key issue which had united the OAU, given it purpose and defined its role in the social transformation of Africa and the world.

Why did the more than one-third of the members of the OAU who stayed away from the 19th Summit decide to risk the existence of the OAU over such an issue and by so doing open the way to a process of expansionism by member states that covet the territory of their neighbour?

This question is especially important in view of the fact that this is not the first time that Africa has experienced territorial aggrandisement on the part of the Moroccan bourgeois-feudal ruling group. In 1959, the Moroccan government laid claim to a large part of north-west Africa, including portions of Algeria and Mali, as well as the territories of Mauretania and Western Sahara.

Eventually this led to a war with Algeria in 1963 which was ultimately settled through negotiation between the belligerents. At that time, Hassan II sought the support of the rest of Africa to legitimise this claim. Correctly Africa refused to support this colonial venture. Thanks in part to this stand, Mauretania is today an independent state.

Underlying Africa's united determination to resist Morocco's expansionism was, of course, the principle agreed at the founding conference of the OAU, 20 years ago now, that the new states should be set up on the basis of the inherited colonial boundaries. It is in fact on the basis of this principle that, for the last two decades, the OAU has opposed Somalia's attempts to seize Djibouti as well as portions of the territories of Ethiopia and Kenya.

Even in the case of Lesotho, which, during the 70's announced claims on portions of South African territory, the OAU advised that it would only support Lesotho if she was acting on the basis of agreement with the South African liberation movement. After discussion with the ANC, Lesotho dropped this claim. Similarly, in the current case of the proposed cession of South African territory to Swaziland, the OAU secretariat has openly declared that Africa would support Swaziland only on condition that the South African liberation movement endorsed the Swazi claim. (As is well known, the ANC, the SACP and the broad democratic movement of South Africa have opposed this "land deal".)

The continent's opposition to expansionism has naturally been accompanied by equal hostility to fragmentation of the African countries. Accordingly, Africa opposed the secessionist activities of Tshombe and his Katanga and those of Ojukwu with his Biafra. Further, the OAU has continued to demand the return of the islands of Mayotte and Diego Garcia to Comoro and Mauritius respectively. It has also categorically rejected Pretoria's Bantustan programme and refused to recognise the Bantustan enclaves which the apartheid regime has proclaimed as independent states.

The Basic Problem

The original attempt to present the dispute over the admission of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic as constitutional in character, hinging on whether a simple majority was sufficient for the admission of new members, disguised the fact that this dispute originated from more fundamental and complex issues. In good measure, the division that emerged recalled the "Casablanca" and "Monrovia" blocs which existed prior to the formation of the OAU, with the Casablanca bloc grouping the more progressive states.

In dissolving these blocs and uniting their members within the OAU, due regard was given to the so-called principle of universality, to which the United Nations Organisation adheres. Accordingly all independent African states are, to all intents and purposes, guaranteed membership of the OAU, regardless of their internal and external policies. The problems posed by the application of this rule were sharply brought to the fore when Comoro was allowed to continue as a member of the OAU after its first post-independence government was overthrown by an invading mercenary force in 1978, and a new one installed by these mercenaries. This government today represents Comoro in the OAU despite the organisation's specific calls for the prohibition of the use of mercenaries on the continent.

It is true that the OAU excluded Comoro from the 1978 Summit but readmitted her in 1979, after the regime installed by the mercenaries had held elections to give itself a stamp of legality. The failure to convene the 19th Summit has posed the question whether it is possible to reactivise the OAU as a progressive grouping and to maintain the principle of universality. This issue came to the surface at the aborted 19th Summit when some of the states that supported the admission of the SADR called for the expulsion of Morocco.

It is clear that the countries that Morocco managed to mobilise to paralyse the OAU belong to a grouping dominated by neo-colonialist regimes. It is also obvious that the immediate supporters of the Polisario Front, which leads the people of Western Sahara in their struggle for national emancipation, specifically Algeria nd Libya, belong among the African states which are striving to establish a genuinely independent line of development.

The conclusion is therefore inescapable that the struggle over the issue of the admission of the SADR into the OAU was in fact a confrontation between the two tendencies within the African national liberation movement, the one submitting to imperialist diktat to produce neo-colonialist "solutions" and the other, anti-imperialist in its orientation.

This is by no means to suggest that the issue of the SADR membership of the OAU can or should be used as a touchstone to determine which government in

Africa is anti-imperialist and which not. After all, it is true that countries such as Malawi and Swaziland both refused to boycott the 19th Summit and accepted the majority view that the SADR be admitted as a member of the OAU.

Rather, the varied nature of the alliance that supports the SADR demonstrates the complexity of the African political reality. This complexity is in part a manifestation of the incomplete formation of class forces on the continent, the overlapping and interaction of the national and class struggles and the unevenness of the world process of transition from capitalism to socialism.

Dispute over Chad

However, as the related issue of Chad shows, there can be no gainsaying the fact that in essence the conflict within the OAU reflects the contradiction between the anti-imperialist and the pro-imperialist tendencies in African politics. The stand taken by the hosts of the 19th Summit, the Libyan Jamahiriya, in support of Goukouni Oueddei and against Hissen Habre, meant that Africa had to decide which trend it supported in the 20-year-old Chadian conflict, the anti-imperialist or the neo-colonialist.

At its formation in 1966, the National Front for the Liberation of Chad, Frolinat, adopted a programme, some of whose main elements were the struggle against neo-colonialism, the formation of a government of national unity, the execution of an agrarian reform in favour of the poor peasants and the closure of French military bases in Chad.

Expelled from the Front in 1976, Habre formed his own army, the Armed Forces of the North (FAN), and entered into discussions with the neo-colonialist regime of Felix Malloum. These negotiations led to the formation of a new government in 1978, with Malloum as president and Habre as prime minister.

Frolinat however continued the armed struggle while, in a struggle for power, military clashes repeatedly occurred between the forces loyal to the two factions in the government. This government finally collapsed in 1979.

With the various forces involved in the Chad conflict having concluded an agreement at a meeting held in Lagos, Nigeria in August 1979, with the participation of the Nigerian government, a provisional government of national unity, GUNT, was formed in November with Goukouni Oueddei, the leading commander of the Frolinat forces, as President, and Habre as Minister of Defence. Peace however still eluded the people of Chad as the Habre forces, the FAN, and those of Oueddei, the People's Armed Forces, the FAP, resumed in battle. In April, 1980, President Oueddei dismissed his Defence Minister, Hissen Habre.

The following month, the GUNT achieved one of the objectives inscribed in the programme of Frolinat at its formation. The French troops left Chad. The civil war however continued, with the FAN controlling a large part of the capital, Ndjamena, and assisted by Egypt.

Aided by Libya, with which it had a treaty of friendship, the GUNT finally defeated the FAN, many of whose forces retreated to the Sudan. After another meeting in Lagos, the GUNT was reconstituted to broaden its base, with Oueddei, a northerner, as its President and Lt. Col. Kamougue, who comes from the south, as vice-president.

The OAU recognised this government. In an effort to help stop the blood-letting in Chad and to achieve the withdrawal of Libyan troops from that country, the OAU, under the chairmanship of Kenyan President Daniel Arap-Moi, agreed in 1981 to send a peace-keeping force to Chad, made up of units supplied by Nigeria, Zaire, Guinea, Senegal, Benin, Togo and Gabon.

Persuaded to believe that this OAU initiative represented a collective African commitment to peace and stability in Chad, the Oueddei government endorsed the decisions of the OAU and accordingly requested the Libyan troops to leave Chad, which they did in November 1981. The African peace-keeping force moved into the country and took up its positions.

By 1982, however, the government of Chad had once more changed. Habre refused to respect the OAU decisions, as did his backers, the pro-imperialist regimes of Egypt and Sudan. The war resumed. The peace-keeping force refused to keep the peace, surrendering its positions to the Habre forces. The carefully constructed alliance brought together in the GUNT fell apart and the Habre forces marched triumphantly into Ndjamena. Oueddei had to flee, only to resume the armed struggle again from his stronghold in the north of the country.

Clearly the OAU peace-keeping force in Chad acted in favour of a faction acceptable to imperialism, as did the UN peace-keeping force in Zaire (Congo Kinshasa) in 1960. It was of course not by accident that during the Presidency of Oueddei, the United States government worked to produce a situation of tension and confrontation between the US and the Libyan Jamahiriya. The intention of US imperialism was clearly to make it difficult for the Libyan government to come to the assistance of the GUNT, and thus to stop the emergence of another country in Africa with an anti-imperialist outlook.

Pro- and Anti-Imperialism

Earlier, in 1976, the OAU had also been deeply divided over the issue of the recognition and admission of the People's Republic of Angola as a member.

Once again, the fight within the OAU was in essence about which tendency in African politics to support, the anti-imperialist or the pro-imperialist.

The victory of the progressive forces on this question is a matter of historical record. In this regard it is however important to note that the invasion of Angola by the apartheid South African regime and its open alliance with the puppet UNITA and FNLA forces were important factors which, in the eyes of many African countries, set the MPLA apart as the only genuinely anti-colonial force among the Angolan signatories of the Alvor Agreements of 1975, which laid down the provisions for bringing Angola to independence. It was also of great significance that at this time Nigeria had a patriotic government headed by General Mustafa Mohamed, which not only sought to eradicate neo-colonialism in Nigeria, but also to increase Nigeria's contribution to the struggle for the liberation of Southern Africa. Accordingly Nigeria, with her prestige and influence, came out for the recognition of the People's Republic of Angola.

To return to the issue of Chad and the SADR, it is worth noting that the heads of state and government of the countries that contributed troops to the Chadian peace-keeping force stayed away from one or both of the abortive sessions of the OAU 19th Summit. Thus we can see that this grouping agreed, to a greater or lesser extent, on a number of questions, including support for Morocco and opposition to the birth of patriotic and consistently progressive governments in Chad and Western Sahara.

Of importance to the whole question of the future of the OAU is the reality that the forces of neo-colonialism managed to act together as a bloc, effectively to frustrate the intentions of the OAU as an organisation governed by a democratic constitution. This issue acquires added significance from the fact that international imperialism has, for some time, entertained the hope of constituting a standing African counter-revolutionary task force to police the continent in the interests of reaction.

In 1978 various African governments, including those of Morocco, Egypt, Senegal, Ivory Coast and Gabon, joined hands with the imperialist countries, especially the US, France and Belgium, to save the Mobutu regime in Zaire when it was faced with an armed uprising in the Shaba Province. Arising out of this operation the French Administration under Giscard d'Estaing, during a Franco-African summit conference held in Paris, called for the formation of an "inter-African force" in the hope that this would obviate the need to deploy extra-African forces in similar situations, as France and Belgium had done in the Shaba Province.

To demonstrate the viability of the project, Moroccan forces replaced the French troops when the latter withdrew. The African progressive forces managed to defeat this imperialist project of an interventionist African expeditionary force before it could take root. However, so long as imperialism maintains that it has a right and duty to police Africa, so long will it try to use Africans to carry out this task.

The continued determination of the imperialist countries to intervene in Africa militarily, if necessary, can be judged from the fact that even the socialist-communist coalition government of France has gone so far as to announce its intention further to improve the efficacy of the forces of intervention that it has deployed against the African and other peoples. For this purpose, the Defence Minister, Charles Hernu, announced during the month of April this year that France would establish a highly mobile 50,000-strong "action and rapid assistance force" for use in Europe and overseas, including Africa.

Economic Factors

The deterioration of the economic situation in the overwhelming majority of the African countries, which continue to be integrated within the international imperialist system, has served further to increase the dependence of these countries on this system and to entrench the forces of neo-colonialism.

Taking the underdeveloped countries as a whole, in the five years from 1978 to 1982, their external debt rose from $US 336.60 billion to an estimated $US 626.00 billion. In the same period, the debt-servicing burden of these countries, increasing at a higher rate than the debt itself, grew from $US 56.90 billion to $US 131.30 billion.

On the other hand, the rate of increase of the gross domestic product of the underdeveloped countries has declined from 4.4 per cent in 1979 to 0.6 per cent in 1981. In the period 1987 to 1982, exports fell at an average annual rate of 1.7 per cent.

These economic trends were of course as much a reality of independent Africa as of the rest of the underdeveloped world. To take a few countries, by 1979 Zaire's external debt was variously reported at between $US 3 and 5 billion. Already by 1975 she could not meet her debt charges. Between 1970 and 1977, the GNP declined at an annual average rate of 1.4 per cent.

Concerned at these developments, finance capital decided to take things in hand and in 1978 placed a representative of the International Monetary Fund inside the Zairean Central Bank to manage the country's finances, and apportioned various sectors of the economy to be supervised by individual western countries such as France and Belgium. Thus the NATO soldiers and the bankers came together to protect their loans and the investments of the trans-national corporations, to retain Zaire within the imperialist camp and to extend the life of a pliant neo-colonial regime and, inevitably, to use this regime against the forces of progress in Africa, when the need arises.

After the death of President Nasser in 1970, the leadership of Egypt fell into the hands of an outright pro-imperialist faction of the Arab Socialist Union, led by Anwar Sadat. In 1974, his faction, constituting the government, opened the country to full-scale penetration by foreign monopoly capital, especially from the United States.

By the end of 1977, Egypt's external debt exceeded $US 12 billion. Between the years 1972 and 1980 food imports quadrupled. At the same time food and other subsidies were removed, resulting in a jump in the cost of living.

The masses responded to this attack on their living standards and the enrichment of the local and foreign bourgeoisie at their expense with massive demonstrations in the major cities and towns. The "bread riots" were suppressed with maximum force, resulting in many people killed, wounded and detained.

The ruling group in Egypt, representing the interests of local reaction and domestic and foreign capital, had to pay for its economic, military and political dependence on US imperialism in particular, by reversing the popular gains scored during the Nasser Presidency, suppressing the progressive movement within the country and bowing down to the command of international reaction in foreign policy.

Accordingly Cairo abrogated the Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union, signed the Camp David Agreement with Tel Aviv and Washington, permitted the US to use Egyptian territory for its aggressive military purposes and acted to protect Mobutu of Zaire and Nimeiri of Sudan, while its forces have fought on Morocco's side against the Polisario Front and against the patriotic forces in Chad, led by Goukouni Oueddei.

We could take other countries in Africa such as the Sudan, Somalia and Kenya. Once more they would tell the same story of inadequate internal economic development, increased dependence on foreign monopoly capital, the reduction in the standard of living of the people, internal reaction and subservience to imperialist global strategy in foreign policy.

The experience around the abortive 19th Summit of the OAU shows that the group of countries which display these features is determined to use its collective strength to impose its will on the OAU, to transform this organisation into an appendage of international imperialism, or to mute its progressive voice. Should they fail to achieve these objectives, the forces of reaction are prepared to put the very existence of the OAU at stake or otherwise paralyse it.

It is however important to bear in mind that the 19th Summit was attended by a comfortable majority of the member states of the OAU. Clearly, for the reasons stated earlier in this article, the Organisation continues to command the loyalty of the bulk of its members. Such is its prestige historically, and such are the hopes it has aroused among the conscious and patriotic masses of the continent, that any governments that contribute to its destruction can only expect that sooner or later the peoples both of their own countries and of the continent will call them to account.

Progressive Forces

At the core of the alliance fighting for the survival of the OAU and its strengthening as an instrument of progressive change, stand the socialist, the revolutionary democratic and the patriotic forces of the continent. These are the forces to whom the future belongs, the grave-diggers of the system of colonial, neo-colonial and imperialist domination and exploitation of Africa and her peoples.

In the 20 years since the formation of the OAU, the progressive forces of the continent have grown in strength and maturity. The number of Marxist-Leninist parties has grown, with some of them being the ruling parties of their countries. In other countries, revolutionary democratic forces are in power or otherwise active in the struggle to wrench the continent out of the clutches of the imperialist system.

Southern Africa is in the grip of an historic struggle to decide whether the region as a whole remains an enclave of imperialism or a zone of independent development and socialist orientation. The certain victory of the revolutionary forces in this area will contribute in a decisive manner to change the balance of forces in Africa and to weaken the hold and influence of imperialism throughout the continent.

The capitalist path of development in Africa has failed. It has led to the reduction of the standard of living of the people, the curtailing of their democratic rights, and turned their countries' independence into a mockery. Bourgeois propagandists are no longer able to hide the fact that their favourite examples of capitalist development in Africa, such as Kenya, have over the last twenty years produced a society of impoverished peasants, a huge unemployed urban proletariat and a wealthy thin upper stratum which monopolises political power and has increased Kenya's dependence on imperialism. By permitting the US to establish military bases in Kenya, this ruling group has integrated this country within the global strategy of US imperialism as a junior partner.

The struggle that erupted within the OAU was accordingly a reflection of the class struggle that is raging within and among the countries of Africa. It has to do with whether the OAU should be a collective instrument for the genuine liberation of Africa, an empty shell which takes a "neutral" position in this class struggle, or an agent for the entrenchment of neo-colonialism on the continent.

Its ability to exist and function in its original form will depend on the intensity of the conflict between the forces of social progress on the one hand and those of reaction on the other, not only within Africa, but also globally. Recognising the international importance of Africa and the OAU the imperialist countries and reactionary Arab States intervened to sabotage the convening of the 19th Summit.

The toiling masses and the patriotic and revolutionary forces of Africa, however, want to see their countries and their continent enjoying genuine political and economic independence as well as economic and social progress. These forces are therefore engaged in struggle to achieve these objectives.

The struggle includes an effort to maintain the OAU as an alliance of forces for the decolonisation of the continent, for the deepening and extension of the process of transformation in favour of the popular masses, and for the alignment of Africa on the side of the world movement that fights for an end to imperialist hegemony, for the genuine independence of the peoples, and for world peace. The unity of the forces fighting for these goals remains a prime task that faces the continent.

Time will tell whether, in its present form, the Organisation of African Unity is the appropriate organisational vehicle for the realisation of an all-African anti-imperialist unity.

Amongst the 42 men, women and children slaughtered in cold blood by the invading South African military in Maseru, Lesotho, last December was one of the outstanding young members of the South African Communist Party. Just before his death he had been working on an analysis of the Botha regime's so-called "area defence strategy". The following essay incorporates some of his conclusions.

OUR NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION WILL DEFEAT THE ENEMY

By Gene Gungushe (Titus)

Our army Umkhonto We Sizwe draws its military doctrine from the revolutionary political line of the national liberation forces led by the ANC. The African National Congress in its *Strategy and Tactics* (1969) and South African Communist Party in its programme *The Road to South African Freedom* (1962) elucidated the leading revolutionary role of the African working class in our national democratic revolution. It goes without saying that our liberation army, MK, must be rooted among the advanced class; that proletarian blood must dominate its ranks and command; that this army should (at the beginning) engage the enemy in the major industrial areas of our country in order to arouse its broadest and firmest base in the working class, the proletariat.

A people's army swells its ranks through inspiring revolutionary action and not through coercive conscription. This initially deliberate urban emphasis of our armed actions should never be confused with the vulgar concept of workerism — a trend which vulgarises the scientific fact that "of all classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today the proletariat alone is the really revolutionary class" and adopts sectarian attitudes which culminate in tactical and strategic disaster.

Our army has maintained the principle of surprising the enemy. Whilst the enemy was searching for us behind the bushes of the Northern Transvaal our gallant forces were hitting right in the depth of the country. We may only recall the attacks on Moroka, Orlando, Booysens and Wonderboom police stations to comprehend the strategic blunder of the enemy. All these operations were conducted more than 400 kilometres from the northern boundaries of our country. The attacks on Swartkoppies (Port Elizabeth), Fort Jackson (East London) and the President's Council (Cape Town) were all more than 1600 km from the Northern Transvaal. These actions of our army, deep inside the country, put to shame the military strategy of South Africa's decaying capitalism. The enemy is facing the problem of maintaining the confidence of the beneficiaries of apartheid, its supporters and hangers-on. They desperately want to know how our armed combatants managed to penetrate deep into the country — up to Cape Town — to attack and survive. The first in the fix was former minister Jimmy Kruger, then Louis Le Grange, then P. W. Botha and now Magnus Malan. In 1977 Kruger, expressing the group feeling of big business, urged apartheid supporters to learn to live with MK action and warned that MK cannot be destroyed, it can only be contained.

V. I. Lenin, founder of the Bolshevik Party, leader of the first successful socialist revolution and founder of the first socialist state, was also the founder of the first socialist army, the Red Army, the army of emancipated workers and peasants. This proletarian commander, military scientist and strategist, when elaborating the principles of revolutionary military organisation, used to stress amongst others, *"The principle of splitting the enemy forces"*. This is not an optional tactic but a strategic principle of revolutionary armed struggle.

Our army MK, basically a revolutionary army of workers and peasants, embraces this principle. The peak of its application was during the anti-republic campaign of May 1981. (This campaign was not monarchist as its title might suggest, but it was revolutionary because it was against the racist republic which signifies nothing but fascism masquerading as republican democracy.) The enemy did not know where to expect MK action and in what form.

Furthermore the military offensive of our army was coupled with political actions of the masses. It was during that campaign that the racist military supremo Magnus Malan was yawning in London and came back to declare *every factory an operational area.* The anti-republic campaign was indeed a dress rehearsal of the inevitable armed uprising to destroy the racist capitalist order in our country.

The Enemy's Analysis

The enemy analysed the anti-republic campaign and the military supremos looked at their sector in particular. They pinpointed the danger as the scattered and unpredictable nature of MK attacks and the relation of these attacks to the proletariat. The warlord in command of the South African Defence Force, Gen. Constand Viljoen, openly expressed his fear of the MK strategy of splitting his forces, depleting their morale and rendering them vulnerable and useless. It is in an attempt to pre-empt such an eventuality that Viljoen came with yet another high sounding phrase — area defence strategy.

Whilst full of danger for our revolution, this area defence strategy is neither invincible nor novel. It mostly consists of the setting up of urban and rural commandos to support the South African police and military in the maintenance of "law and order", protect national keypoints and other vulnerable points, gather intelligence and conduct counter-insurgency operations — roadblocks, cordons, searches, patrols and the pursuit of the enemy. A study of the strategy shows that it is aimed not merely at MK but also against the broad masses of our people — the workers and other urban strata and the rural toilers.

The enemy is already engaged in spying on and undermining the workers in the factories and their trade unions. Watchmen and others are enlisted as labour spies to collect data on suspected workers and hand over the information to BOSS (NIS) officers. These security men are part of their planned industrial commandos.

The area defence strategy also proposes the recruitment of part of the oppressed into its own forces to fight its battles in the rural areas.

Bantustan Impis

The Bantustan tribal impis — Transkei Defence Force, "Combined forces of Ciskei", "Bophutswana National Guard" and other flunkey groupings have been assigned definite roles in this strategy. They will serve as area defence forces in their respective localities. The Ciskei tribal cocoon is perhaps the most enthusiastic in serving the Pretoria master. The dynasty policing the area on behalf of the racists there, the Sebe brothers, have gone so far as to form their own forces, apart from the combined forces, to fight against us. It is euphemistically called "Ikrele LeSezwe" (the sword of the nation). This gang is ostensibly assembled to protect white racist rule. It is the force which will stage acts of provocation in the neighbouring country of Lesotho in addition to maiming and murdering our people.

Charles Sebe, a self-styled Lt-General and Commander of the Combined Forces, when announcing the Ikrele (*Sunday Times* 14/11/82) repeatedly and unashamedly provoked the kingdom of Lesotho calling it a "terrorist base". He tried to portray this Ikrele as a highly guarded secret. But if this poor ballerina of the Pretoria bourgeois rulers could know that our people knew of Ikrele when it was still being schemed, he would be scared of having the word secret in his vocabulary.

The designation of Bantustan impis as area defence forces has an express aim of quickly transforming our national liberation war into a civil war, a war in which oppressed fights against oppressed. In the Transkei the training of Selous Scouts is at full steam ahead. The international social outcast who commanded the Selous Scouts in Rhodesia, Ron Reid-Daly, "resigned" his post as Commander of the Transkei impi and in a broadcast at dawn on Monday 15/11/82 announced that his new task would be to concentrate on training a 'counter insurgency' force to face the revolutionary threat.

What is the historical destiny of the enemy's area defence strategy? As pointed out earlier, bourgeois military strategy is a strategy of a decaying system, a strategy of an enemy on the retreat. This stems from the position of the capitalist mode of production in our epoch — the position of sinking into obsolescence and collapse. The area defence strategy is bound to collapse just like the other bourgeois strategies. Our revolution has 25.5 million black oppressed and a serious slice of the 4.5 million whites to draw from. The enemy has a limited social base which is steadily narrowing. Bourgeois commanders are gradually being reduced to generals without armies. The targets in our country are a vast entity: 31,000 factories, 72,000 farms, hundreds of thousands of soldiers, police and agents, thousands of kilometres of railways, bridges and roads!

In short this strategy cannot meet the requirements of the enemy without causing the collapse of the economy. South African capitalism is racist and its effects are staring the racist strategists right in the eye today.

Their dilemma? How to strike a balance, an accord, between the growing skilled manpower needs of the economy and the desperate needs of the South African destruction force. The doomed nature of the area defence strategy should not lead us to evolutionism: that it will collapse by itself. *It has to be destroyed!!*

The People's Task

In our drive to render this strategy useless we have to:

1. Broaden and consolidate the unity of our people. We have to strive for unity in action of the broad masses of our people. The question of unity of the masses should be epitomised by the unity of the advanced class — the proletariat. This does not mean that we should postpone the task of achieving the unity of the entire people to the moment we have completed unifying the workers. What it means is that in uniting the masses we should strive above all for proletarian unity.
2. Broaden and extend the social base of our national democratic revolution into the white camp. Due to the growing militancy and unity of the oppressed, serious cracks are manifesting themselves within the oppressed nation. Growing numbers of whites identify with our national democratic revolution, eg the emergence of Polstu in the alma mater of Afrikaner ideological reaction — Stellenbosch, the emergence of the Detainees' Parents Support Committees, draft dodging, conscientious objectors, AWOL within the SADF and the formation of the Committee of South African War Resisters abroad.

We have to be pragmatic in extending the social base of our national democratic revolution in the white community. We have to raise concrete issues and not stop at general humanitarian feelings against apartheid. Let us raise:

(a) The question of patriotism. The ruling class is intimidating every white democrat and revolutionary with accusations of treason, lack of patriotism etc. We have to drive it home to the white working class that patriotism is incompatible with monoply capitalism: that it is at loggerheads with fascism and racism, that it is in unison with national freedom, equality, social progress and peace.

(b) Just and unjust war. The just nature of our national liberation war should be explained from the politics of national liberation. The enemy's war of repression should be exposed as unjust, predatory and in the interests of the capitalist class, above all the 400 millionaires owning the bulk of our wealth. We should fight against the war psychosis whipped up by the enemy, harness every anti-war feeling from conscious anti-imperialism to pacifism in order to isolate the enemy within his own base.

(c) Our attitude towards white workers should not be fatalistic. While fully conscious of the historically transient treachery of the bulk of white workers, we should try to extend our propaganda to them. We should call upon them to look closer at the enemy, show them how they have been made pawns of the bourgeoisie, show them how the National Party regards them as nothing but the socio-political shield of monopoly capital against the black workers, against the interests of the entire working people.

The white workers are amongst those who are sent to the border, to the operational area and other trouble spots. Our propaganda, coupled with our armed assault by our army Umkhonto We Sizwe, will at a moment to come seriously undermine the enemy's monopoly support among the white workers. We must gradually introduce Lenin's class approch to our conflict: tell the white workers to turn the war of national oppression by the ruling class of the oppressor nation into a civil war, to turn their guns against the bourgeoisie.

This is not an immediate feasibility, but it can come only when the driving forces of our national democratic revolution are brought into full play, only when the victory of the revolution is obviously inevitable. For that, both the political and military forces of our revolution have to sweat.

Our enemy, like its class counterparts elsewhere, has lackeys. The most dangerous of these, besides agents, are the Bantustan political and military mercenaries, the Matanzimas, Sebes, Mphephus, Mangopes, Ngcebas etc. Politically these traitors have been exposed, but military action is needed against them. The Bantustan impis also need a class approach in our drive to destroy them. We should conduct a two-pronged attack:

a) a political persuasive approach towards those who join the impis due to unemployment and empty stomachs, but

b) ruthless military harassment and extermination of those who join because of their class commitment to flunkeyism. These include the command of the impis, the bureaucratic compradore bourgeois traitors emerging in the Bantustans and their overlords.

We are faced with the task of creating a full-scale military intelligence network. The situation demands it. We have seen the enemy pay serious attention to intelligence even at area defence level. Reconnaissance, due to its functional objectives, cannot furnish us with a constant flow of information about every step and plan of the enemy. Military intelligence with its continuity and constancy is in a position to furnish us with a clear picture at all stages. It is able to penetrate the enemy and know his plans from within.

Finally one can conclude by briefly restating the case against the regime's area defence strategy.

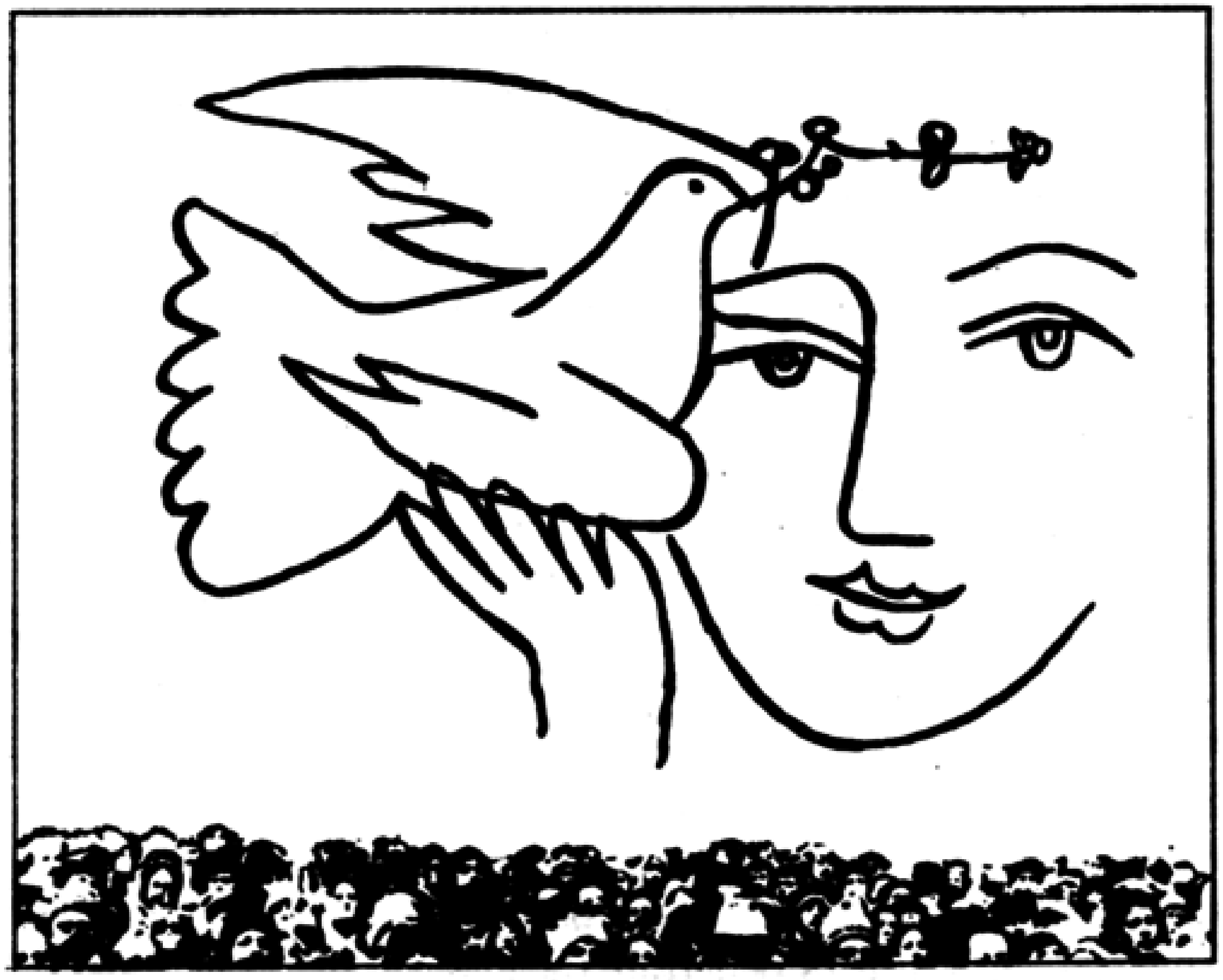
1. It is not a sign of bold initiative on the part of the enemy. It is a desperate response to a deteriorating situation.

2. It is defensive (ie forced resistance) because the enemy is confronted by the driving forces of our national democratic revolution.

3. It is historically doomed because it stems from a politically, economically, socially and morally decaying capitalism.

The growth of our army, Umkhonto We Sizwe, its consolidation with and among the masses, above all workers and peasants, will put to shame all bourgeois military strategies. Our adherence to the principles of splitting the enemy forces, maintaining the element of surprise in attack, sustaining the initiative and offensive will see us emerge victorious over the racist monopoly capitalist SADF. It will see our revolutionary military science humiliating racist bourgeois military science.

To the racist military, we promise to break their spinal cord on the battlefield. Their Dien Bien Phu is still coming!



KARL MARX AND THE COLONIAL QUESTION

by Khumalo Migwe

Marxism has from the very outset been an irreconcilable enemy of all national oppression and has consistently fought for national equality, for complete freedom and self-determination of nations. The well-known formulation of Marx and Engels, "a people that oppresses other peoples cannot itself be free," was termed by Lenin the "fundamental principle of internationalism." National oppression engenders distrust and alienation among the workers of different nationalities. It creates political enemies out of class brothers, and nothing so much prevents them from coming together and joining their forces in the struggle for their common destiny.

Karl Marx would not have been a Marxist if he had not resolutely supported the liberation struggle of the colonial peoples against the imperialist bourgeoisie oppressing them. Certainly, Marxism-Leninism is a scientific expression of the interests particularly of the working class, but who will deny that the colonised peoples look up to Marx and Lenin for guidance just as the proletariat?

During this centenary year of Marx's death, 1983, let us discuss once more his views on this particular question, the colonial question, and see what lessons the South African revolution can draw.

The establishment of a refreshment station at the Cape of Good Hope by the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Nederlandsche Ge-Octroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie) exactly 331 years ago (1652), far from signalling a good hope for the indigenous population of South Africa, marked instead the beginning of unprecedented savagery and robbery by the colonialist hordes whose system of rule, right up to this day, rests on national oppression and subjugation on a scale virtually unparalleled in the modern world. It rests on the most abominable forms of the exploitation of man by man, perpetuating obsolete and barbarous institutions long since condemned by mankind. This colonial oppression might have changed appearances, forms and indeed even the language of the oppressor over the years, but it remains with all its essential features.

It was in the Communist Manifesto that Karl Marx first laid bare the link between colonialism and capitalism and exposed the monstrous exploitation of the colonial peoples, the robbery of their raw material as well as destruction of their cultural personality in the name of "civilisation".

"The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe," says the Manifesto. "It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere." Discovering America here, rounding the Cape for the East-Indian and Chinese markets there, capitalism systematically dislodged every national industry of the peoples, reduced their self-sufficiency to zero, and "in place of old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes."

Marx's study of the colonial question also gave him additional background material for examining important aspects of the capitalist mode of production, and this is reflected in his monumental *Capital.* Writing in Volume One, for instance, he said:

> *"The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalled the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production."*[1]

Again in the third Volume he reiterated the link between capitalism and colonialism:

> *"There is no doubt... that in the 16th and 17th centuries the great revolutions, which took place in commerce with the geographical*

discoveries and speeded the development of merchant's capital, constitute one of the principal elements in furthering transition from feudal to capitalist mode of production."[2]

True, even some bourgeois democrats of the time, even certain clergymen, did blame the colonial system as the causal factor, namely, the developing capitalism in Europe. But what made Marx stand shoulders-high above their lamentations (for that is all it was), was that his theoretical analysis laid a firm foundation for the attitude of the proletariat of the oppressor nations to the national struggle of the colonised people. He showed the interconnection and interdependence of the national liberation struggle and the workers' struggle against capitalism. The decisive historical significance that Lenin also attached to the co-operation of the working class and national liberation movements is evident from the fact that he declared it would be correct to supplement the well-known slogan of Marx and Engels by saying: "Workers of all countries and oppressed peoples, unite!"[3]

Fundamental Principle of Internationalism

Probably no other country in the world today illustrates this deep-going internal connection and relationship between capitalism and colonialism more than South Africa, because here the root and its fruit are to be found on the same soil. For example, it is not the metropolitan country there (in Europe) and the colony here (in Africa), but instead two nations in a single country, one the oppressor and the other oppressed.

Since by socio-economic standards South Africa is a capitalist society, the primary contradiction is that between labour and capital, between those who privately own the means of production (these happen to come exclusively from the white-skinned race) and those who do not but who have to sell their labour power to the capitalists for wages in order to live (these include both blacks and whites). But in the method of its operation, that is, in its strategy to maximise profits and to guarantee its continuing exploitation of labour, the capitalists have divided the South African working class on colour lines (and such division carries significant socio-political implications), resting such criteria on the colonial factor — the colonialisation of Africa by Europe. The stress on the colonial factor as the actual criterion rather than the colour (in the dictionary definition of the term) is important in so far as a fundamental difference should be seen between South African racism and that of countries like the United States for example.

The South African white worker thus is not just getting crumbs from the super-profits accruing to the capitalist class, but has been given a colonial political seat at the ruling table of the capitalist to help in the decisions on how to subjugate the dark-skinned in order to have yet more and more profits. Our experience in South African history shows that it is not only the capitalists but also the majority of the white workers that want to maintain our inferior economic status. The history of white labour, even at its militant heights, is partly the struggle against economic reforms in favour of the black man. By insisting on the retention of feudal relations of production they retard the very development of the economy under capitalism. During times of economic crisis of capitalism, which in the ordinary course of events, would affect him as a worker, the white worker finds his economic burdens being carried for him by the black worker. The burning heat of capitalist exploitative reality does not seriously threaten his comparatively luxurious daily life because of the cushion provided by the appropriation part of the wages that should have gone to the black worker. No more are the majority of white workers .inspired by Lenin and the Bolshevik example; their allegiance has gone to Arrie Paulus and Dr. Treurnicht. "And thus has the South Africa Labour movement grown up," said David Ivon Jones, the first secretary of the International Socialist League, "more intolerant towards the native slave than any working class in the world."[4]

This South African situation resembles very much the one Karl Marx himself wrote about in a letter to Meyer and Vogt on April 9, 1870:

> *"Every industrial and commercial centre in England now possesses a working class divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as competitor who lowers his standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the ruling nation and so turns himself into a tool of aristocrats and capitalists of his country against Ireland, thus strengthening their domination over himself. He cherishes religious, social and national prejudices against the Irish worker... The Irishman pays him back with his own money. He sees in the English worker at once the accomplice and the stupid tool of the English rule in Ireland... This antagonism is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite its organisation. It is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power." (Marx's emphasis).*

How does the Marxist-Leninist principle of proletarian internationalism apply in South African colonial conditions? It would seem, from the above-given analysis of the relation of nation to class, that we are denying the existence of an objective basis for the South African white workers (the workers of the oppressor nation) to support the national liberation of the black people as a condition of destroying capitalism in South Africa. Could we even say that the South African white workers, given their present economic conditions, aspire for socialism in South Africa?

Social Injustice of Capitalism

In answering this question, we should not allow our reasoning to be blunted by the present class unconsciousness of the white workers, nor by their sentimental support for our capitalist exploiters and oppressors, because in the final analysis the objective desire for socialism stems from the gross social injustice based on the private ownership of the social means of production. Scientifically speaking, therefore, it does not matter how many crumbs the white workers receive at the table of the capitalist. It is not this which determines whether or not they should desire and strive for socialism. The fundamentally determining element, objectively, is the position they occupy in relation to the means of production. As the young Karl Marx wrote in 1844:

> *"The question is not what this or that proletarian, or even the whole of the proletariat at the moment considers as its aim. The question is what the proletariat is, and what, consequent on that being, it will be compelled to do."*[5]

Historical materialism, however, cannot be equated to mere economic determinism. We can only think of Man as he actually exists in our society, not in the abstract. Social transformation is not only the effect of predetermined economic development of an automatic nature. So that, at the bottom this question is not a question for theoretical argument but is a practical question facing us now rather than in the unforeseeable future. The situation as it stands in South Africa requires the vigorous shaking of the colonial table *kuchitheke izishebo* (Zulu phrase meaning the spilling to the ground of delicious dishes when all is not well at home) and eventually its complete overthrow by the combination of united mass action and armed struggle, thereby educating as well as forcing the white workers, in the process of the democratic revolution, to take their real (not artificial) position. In the course of this struggle for independence and self-determination, which is led by the black working class, a class that desires liberation from national oppression as much as freedom from economic exploitation, the white workers in particular and the white population in general will realise that the choice is between a democratic form of society (in which they will be accommodated on a just basis) or doom for all those who support our subjugation.

In its essence therefore, given the nature of our special character of colonialism, the solidarity action of the white workers to black national liberation is proletarian internationalism, in the same way as workers in Britain could have given support to the national liberation struggle in Kenya or Zimbabwe. The fact of being in the same country with the nationally oppressed black people does not reduce an iota of this internationalist essence; although, on the other hand, their action against capitalism since it is in the same country and is the same capitalism that the black working class is fighting, will be a typical class struggle of the national proletarians against their national and international bourgeoisie. It should be noted, however, that this assessment of the white working class (and this includes the white community in general, excluding the bourgeoisie), in no way refers to those few white revolutionaries whose total identification with the revolutionary principles of the ANC and its allies makes them equal partners in the struggle against racist injustice. It is in this regard that the African National Congress should be seen as an embryo of the future South African nation, one nation that shall no longer be colour conscious.

On the Irish National Question

Marx and Engels gave much attention to Ireland and the subjugation of its nation by the English invaders who established and maintained relations between the foreign landlords and the local tenant farmers which reminded Marx of relations "between the robber who presents his pistol, and the traveller who presents his purse,"

After a tour of Ireland at the beginning of 1856, Frederick Engels wrote from Manchester in a letter to Marx:

> *"Ireland may be regarded as the first English colony and as one which because of its proximity is still governed exactly in the old way, and one can already notice here that the so-called liberty of the English citizens is based on the oppression of colonies. . . and for all their national Irish fanaticism the fellows feel that they are no longer at home in their own country."*[6]

When Marx analysed the general law of capitalist accumulation in Chapter 25 of Volume I of *Capital,* he provided a lot of researched data on Ireland, which in itself is an illustration of the kind of attention he gave to the colonisation of this land by Britain. In his letters to the press he showed, further, that in her colonial possession of Ireland capitalist Britain was widely resorting to feudal methods of extra economic coercion. When the leaders of the Fenians, an Irish revolutionary organisation which sought to liberate Ireland from British rule and form a republic in the country, were thrown into prison in 1867, Marx wrote strongly worded letters to the French newspaper *L'Internationale* protesting against the silence of the European press about the infamies committed by the British oligarchic bourgeois government in Ireland. Marx did not end his condemnations on paper. True to his own conviction that the important thing is not merely to interpret the world but to change it, he started a solidarity movement for the Irish prisoners which was led by the International. What a fine example, from the founding fathers of our social science themselves, of how to link theory with practice.

"The question now," wrote Marx back to Engels, "is what shall we advise the English workers?" Even at the dawn of the Irish anti-colonial struggle Marx was already considering ways of liberation! But why then was he looking for the solution from the working-class of Britain? About two years later Marx again wrote from London to Kugelmann and again placed the onus on the British workers for the emancipation of Ireland: ". . . But since the English working class undoubtedly throws the decisive weight into the scale of social emancipation generally, the lever has to be applied here (England)."

Marx, the political scientist as well as strategist, was searching for weak spots. His emphasis on the decisive role of the working class of the oppressor nation in this case showed, as the letter to Kugelmann points out, how this criterion of the leading force was to be determined by who "throws decisive weight into the scale of social emancipation". This is exactly how the Soviet Union has approached this question, showing in deeds how socialist victory gives freedom to oppressed nations. Does this not remind us of the similar positions held by some pioneer socialists in South Africa over the relationship between the national and class struggles, and the adoption of the famous 'Native Republic' resolution by the 6th Congress of the Communist International held in Moscow in 1928?

It is interesting to note how Marx, as a result of his continuing study of this Irish question, actually changed his whole strategic approach on the decisive and leading role of the British workers. Now he wrote:

> *"After occupying myself with the Irish question for many years, I have come to the conclusion that the decisive blow against the English ruling classes cannot be delivererd in England but only in Ireland".*[8] (Marx's emphasis).

This is the attitude that the International Workingmen's Association, with Marx's direction, finally took in regard to the Irish question. For Marx the stages were now set clearly, incidentally exactly as we see them in South Africa today:

> *"The overthrow of the English aristocracy in Ireland involves as a necessary consequence its overthrow in England. And this would fulfil the preliminary condition for the proletarian revolution in England."*

Hence it was the task of the International everywhere to put the conflict between England and Ireland in the foreground, and everywhere to side openly with Ireland. And it was the special task of the Central Council in London to awaken a consciousness in the English workers that for them the national emancipation of Ireland is no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment but the first condition of their own social emancipation.

'Civilising Mission' of Capitalism

The racist historians of South Africa have attempted to present a picture of the indigenous African people before the arrival of the white man as savage barbarians without culture or history, who out of their primitive aggressive nature used to conduct wars and raids against those who were bringing civilisation to South Africa.

Karl Marx was profoundly indignant at the hypocritical efforts of bourgeois ideologists to invest the colonialists with a civilising mission and to present them as deserving the gratitude of the peoples they conquered. As a matter of fact, the 'mission' of capitalism in the colonies has nothing to do with the interest of the colonial slaves. The imperialists are never concerned with the all-round development of the economy of the colonies or with preparing them for independent existence. All fabrications to this effect were exposed by Marx. In particular he wrote:

> *"The profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilisation lies unveiled before our eyes, turning from its homes, where it assumes respectable forms, to the colonies, where it goes naked."*[9]

He saw human progress under the bourgeoisie resembling that hideous pagan idol, who would not drink the nectar except from the skulls of the slain. As a journalist for the American newspaper *New York Daily Tribune,* he kept a close watch on events in Asia, particularly the expeditions of the British East India Company as well as those of the British army against the indigenous people. During the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries, the British East India Company (founded in 1600).

waged bloody wars of conquest in the Bengal, Sind, Carnatic, Punjab and other regions of India with the result that by the mid-19th century, almost all India was under the sway of the Company. By deceit, blackmail, violence and outright plunder its businessmen laid their hands on colossal riches, which they transferred to England, leaving a situation where even "those women and children who frequently wore a pair of golden earrings and massive bracelets and anklets of pure gold or silver" were actually pauperised en masse.

Marx followed and commented on the events in Burma, China, Turkey and Afghanistan. In reference to the Anglo-Persian War of 1865-57, Marx wrote to the *Tribune:*

> *"So soon as the Company casts a greedy look on any of the independent sovereigns, or any region whose political and commercial resources or whose gold and jewels are valued, the victim is accused of having violated this or that ideal or restriction, committed some nebulous outrage, and then war is declared, and. . . the perennial force of the fable of the wolf and the lamb is again incarnadined in national history."*[10]

In South Africa, almost at the same time as these occurrences in the East, when our so-called civilizers Theophilus Shepstone and Sir Bartle Frere were very much disturbed by the reluctance of the African people to sell their labour to the white mines and plantations at the price settler Natal offered, they wrote letters to their superiors in England complaining (what a pretext!) about "a vicious military despotism in which every male had been taught from childhood that the sole object of his life was fighting and war." Putting it this way then fitted very well with Frere's justification for giving Cetshwayo an ultimatum demanding the abolition of the Zulu politico-military system within thirty days, thus paving a humiliating way for the British to travel via Isandhlwana.

We do not share the opinion of those who believe in a golden age of the past African society. However, all our civil wars, superstitions and witch-hunts put together, no matter how terrible, did not go deeper than our country's surface, whereas the colonial forces broke down our very social fibre and ruined our families — the very economic units of which society is made. They turned respected and respectable family men into "kitchen boys" and transformed them into migrants and strangers within the borders of their own country.

On the other hand, and this may seem a very strange and paradoxical assertion, imperialist rule has objectively and in spite of itself done some useful work in the colonies. Marx said in a letter to Engels:

> *"I have continued this hidden warfare in a first article on India, in which the destruction of the native industry by England is described as revolutionary. This will be very shocking to them."*[11]

Now, whatever bitterness the spectacle of the crumbling of our ancestral world may have for our personal feelings, sickening as it must be to human feelings to witness "those myriads of industrious patriachal and inoffensive social organisations disorganized and dissolved into their units, thrown into a sea of woes, and their individual members losing at the same time their ancient form of civilisation and their hereditary means of subsistence," we must not forget that from the point of view of social history the colonial master introduced new forces of production: wage labour, machines, minerals and agricultural products — in short they imposed the capitalist mode of production on communal societies. Marx and Engels summarised the effects in the *Communist Manifesto:*

> *"The bourgeoisie compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i.e. to become bourgeois themselves."*

It is precisely in connection with this that Marx referred to the destruction of native industry as "revolutionary". "The question is," he said, "can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution."[12]

Socialism, the only Way Out

There can be no true national equality until class division is ended; only socialism can create the conditions in which national division and race discrimination can be abolished. The working class is the most consistent and active opponent of national oppression. Marxism teaches that socialist revolution leads to complete elimination of national oppression. The *Communist Manifesto* states:

> *"In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put to an end. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end."*

The significance of this proposition is very relevant for the South African revolution, particularly because of its unique colonial-capitalist nature, and the fact that here the black workers who are leading a victorious struggle for national liberation are the same force that can bring about socialism. This working class, while actively destroying the colonial barriers, must also fight under its own banner. Remembering its ultimate goals, it cannot limit itself to a national democratic revolution, but must strive to make the revolution continuous; the revolution must not stop halfway, it must continue until all the propertied classes are removed and state power is conquered by the proletariat.

This theory of continuous revolution was basically developed by Marx and Engels. In the *Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League,* as well as in a number of other works *(The Class Struggles in France* and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* by Marx, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany* by Engels) they pointed out that although the socialist revolution will be preceded by a bourgeois-democratic revolution, it must recognise no historical waiting-room.

The Great October Socialist Revolution confirms with force of example the correctness of Marx's theory by the very successful unity into one stream of the uprising of the working class against the capitalist system and the struggle of the enslaved peoples of tsarist Russia for the overthrow of national oppression.

The assertion that under South African conditions the national democratic revolution has great prospects of proceeding at once to socialist solutions, and that "no significant national demand can be successfully won without the destruction of the capitalist structure", is most correct in view of Marx, Engels and Lenin's own theoretical propositions.

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AFRICA NOTES AND COMMENT

By Du Bois

NIGERIA — Which Way Forward?

The mass, summary expulsion of immigrant workers at the beginning of this year focussed world attention on Nigeria. The workers and their families, the vast majority of whom are ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) nationals, were given two weeks within which to quit the country. The main reason given by the Nigerian government was that the workers were there illegally. Nigeria's right to enforce its immigration laws, both as a sovereign state and within the terms of ECOWAS, of which it is a key member-state, is not in dispute. What has been questioned is whether the Nigerian government showed adequate regard for the plight of the affected workers.

An estimated two million workers from Ghana, Niger, Benin, Togo, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Chad were affected. Many of them had been in Nigeria for years, at least since the mid-seventies when Nigeria's economy began expanding rapidly. They filled the most menial and lowest paid jobs as servants, chefs, waiters and general labourers. They were employed as masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, painters and general artisans. Large numbers were employed as dockers and in the construction industry. There were also skilled workers among them — teachers, doctors, nurses, engineers and administrative workers in the parastatal and civil organisations. They contributed their labour and skills toward Nigeria's growth.

The more chauvinist among the Nigerian press and nationals took the opportunity of blaming the country's present woes — unemployment, rising crime, social unrest etc — on the immigrant workers. The truth is different.

Nigeria's present difficulties stem from an economic crisis brought about by a sharp decline in the country's main export — oil. Nigeria's fortunes have been closely, if not solely, tied up with the production and price of this commodity. The formation of OPEC (the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries), of which Nigeria is a member, in the early 1970's brought production and oil prices under the control of the oil producing countries. To this extent OPEC broke the power of the western oil monopolies (the oil majors such as BP, Shell, Mobil, Texaco, Caltex etc) and the super-profits they made from their control over the natural wealth of these countries. Oil revenues rose sharply with the rise in prices set by OPEC. Developing countries like Nigeria began enjoying an unprecedented economic boom. Migrant workers followed the economic miracle in their hundreds of thousands.

By the early 1980's the miracle began fading. The reason for this is to be found in Nigeria's colonial legacy, and its dependent role and position within the world capitalist economic order since independence.

Patchy Results

Nigeria's development strategy for the 1970's and 1980's was based on the assumption that oil prices would remain more or less stable, as determined by OPEC, and that oil revenues would result in a large enough surplus to fund the country's economic diversification programme. That is, oil money would be recycled to make the country less dependent on oil as a foreign currency earner, to broaden its industrial base, and promote the green revolution in the agricultural sector. The results of the strategy have been patchy. Oil revenues swelled the national coffers. Vast projects, like the building of the new capital, Abuja, got under way. Manufacturing output increased its share of the GDP (gross domestic product) from 4.4% in 1974 to 8.6% in 1981. The construction and service sectors of the economy began expanding. The economic infrastructure was slowly being broadened. With this came a new political stature for Nigeria, despite three military coups and a bloody civil war followed by 13 years of military rule. There were serious negatives. The mining industry declined. More seriously, the green revolution continued to go into reverse — from a 30% share of the GDP to 20% — and Nigeria, from being an exporter of food products, became reliant on imports.

The problem which surfaced dramatically in the 1980's, and which upset the development strategy, was Nigeria's single commodity economy and the crisis of the world capitalist system. Nigeria depends for up to 95% of its foreign exchange earnings and nearly 75% of the federal government's income on oil revenues. Economic slump in the capitalist countries meant less demand for oil. This resulted in an oil glut on the international markets, and consequently to a fall in both the production levels and the price of oil. Oil-based economies, like Nigeria, Mexico, and Venezuela, went into recession. At the same time interest rates have risen sharply in the capitalist countries. By turning to the international capitalist market to raise loan capital to offset the deficits caused by falling oil prices Nigeria has further aggravated the crisis it is facing.

The consequences for Nigerian workers have been serious. The wave of strikes by power, gas, petroleum and postal workers, by dock workers, teachers and civil servants in some states is a reflection of the deteriorating economic circumstances in which they find themselves. An estimated 560,000 workers have been involved in the strikes resulting in more than eight million man-days being lost. With this has come the threat by the Ministry of Labour to ban all strikes, ban the unions, and encouragement to the bosses to withold strikers' wages.

Nigeria's problems, as we have tried to show, are deep-rooted. Immigrant workers may have caused additional strains. They cannot be held responsible for the underlying problems.

An Alternative

There is another Nigeria, still in its embryonic stages, striving to make its voice heard and to influence Nigerians with another vision of society. This emerged vigorously during the centenary conference to mark the hundredth anniversary of the death of Karl Marx under the title "Marx and Africa: A Hundred Years After" held in Ahmadu Bello University from March 14th to 19th. It also appeared during the "Symposium on the Centenary of Karl Marx's death and Works" organised by The Socialist Working Peoples' Party (SWPP) of Nigeria. In his speech at the symposium, Chiaka Anozie, chairman of the SWPP, explained Marxism's relevance to the Nigerian working people and called for a national democratic revolution which "can only be advanced and completed by the oppressed people themselves, led by a vanguard alliance of all the social strata that desire change...". Dapo Fatogun, Cultural Secretary of the Party, dwelt on the influence of Marxism on the class struggles in Nigeria. He analysed the causes of the deepening crisis in Nigeria, and to the question of what is to be done, he answered:

> "The solution is a scientific socialist revolution and a Marxist-Leninist change which will once and for all time erase from our society exploitation of man by man."

SADCC — Breaking the Chains

The formation of the Southern African Development Coordination Council (SADCC) in 1980 dealt a severe blow to the South African regime's attempts to establish regional hegemony over southern Africa. The "Constellation of States" strategy, advanced by Pretoria as far back as 1978, aimed at drawing the independent African states in the sub-continent into an economic union with South Africa. Angola and Mozambique were to be excluded, but the constellation would have included the "independent" Bantustans, the Turnhalle Alliance in Namibia and the then Muzorewa-Smith regime in Zimbabwe. Because of South Africa's economic strength, the constellation would inevitably have increased the dependence of the southern African states. More importantly, economic union with Pretoria was aimed at eroding, if not stopping, the support of the frontline states for the liberation struggles in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. It would also have led to a *de facto* recognition of the Bantustan, DTA and Rhodesian states as then constituted. International imperialism's position in the sub-continent would have been immeasurably strengthened, and the southern African revolution would have suffered a critical setback at a crucial stage.

Within this context the SADCC represents a further political shift in the balance of forces in southern Africa in favour of national liberation, despite the often asserted position by the SADCC that it is an economic not a political organisation.

The plan to set up a "regional economic coordinating group" was first advanced at the Arusha Conference in July, 1979 and the organisation was formally created at the first summit of Heads of State and Government held in Lusaka in April, 1980. During the three years of its existence the SADCC has made impressive advances organisationally and economically. A permanent secretariat with an executive secretary has been set up and a number of inter-state Commissions have begun work in such diverse fields as transport and communications, food production and security, soil conservation and utilisation, crop research, animal disease control, manpower and industrial development, energy conservation, fisheries, wildlife, forestry, mining and the creation of a Southern Africa Development Fund. At its latest annual conference held in Maseru (Lesotho) in January, 1983, ministers of the nine member governments of the SADCC met in session with 400 representatives of 29 governments from Africa, Asia, North America, Europe and the socialist countries and 23 international organisations and development agencies.

By the end of the Maseru conference 206 million dollars of fresh development aid was secured bringing total commitment since 1980 to 1.6 billion dollars. The most urgent priority thus far has been given to the region's transport network. The continuing deficiencies in this sector have created many other problems, not least being the fact that the majority of SADCC states are landlocked and are tied in with South African transport links.

Despite the impressive progress to date the SADCC countries face a number of difficulties in their drive towards economic independence. The South African racist regime poses a key threat in more ways than one. Several countries, most notably Angola and Mozambique, are suffering from acute economic problems because of Pretoria's policy of aggression and destabilisation. A lengthy dossier now exists of the apartheid regime's crimes in this respect. Rail and road links have been sabotaged. Oil fuel depots and refineries have been hit. Ports and power plants have been targets. Even as the conference met in Maseru a Danish project in Lesotho was sabotaged. These actions, according to Edgard Pisani, who attended the conference on behalf of the EEC Development Commission, "are not aimed to stop so-called aggression by the neighbour countries, but to destroy the economic capacity of these countries." The South African army, he added, "has targeted not military installations, but social and economic tools of development". Attempts by the representatives of western governments, deeply implicated by their collaboration with South Africa, to tone down the condemnation of the apartheid regime, met with a decisive rebuff as the Maseru conference communique noted that "there has also been growing external intervention and in this regard the conference strongly condemned deliberate interference by South Africa affecting the economic stability of the SADCC region. . ."

This is a sharp reminder that in southern Africa the question of economic independence cannot be separated from the politics of liberation. The Pretoria regime's "total strategy" policy is aimed at regional domination, not peaceful coexistence. It is aimed at securing the entire region as a "sphere of influence" of imperialism. This means exploiting the human and raw material resources of the sub-continent for the benefit of the South African and international monopolies. Until the apartheid regime is defeated, economic as well as political stability in the SADCC states will continue to be crucially hampered.

GHANA — The Revolution under siege

The expulsion of an estimated 1 million or so Ghanaian workers from Nigeria could not have come at a worse time for the revolutionary government of Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings: The returnees swelled the country's population by about another 10% at a time when a rampant economic crisis persisted and political attempts to stifle the revolution were rife.

When the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) seized power from the regime of Dr Hilla Limann on 31 December, 1981, Ghana's state coffers were virtually empty. There was a large national debt, a persistent balance of payments deficit, and very little, if any, fresh funds to generate economic activity. Agricultural production was hardly sufficient to feed the country's population. Ghana, which had the potential of self-sufficiency in food, had to turn to food imports, causing more strains on the foreign reserves. Inflation was running at over 100%. Basic foodstuffs were not only scarce, but priced well above the common purse. The cocoa industry, from which Ghana derived 60% of its foreign earnings, was run down. Smuggling of cocoa on a large scale to neighbouring countries for prices three times higher than in Ghana was endemic, forcing the PNDC to close the country's borders with the recipient countries.

Economic Crisis

Given the scale of the economic difficulties inherited by the PNDC under the chairmanship of Rawlings, it is hardly surprising that many features of the economic crisis persist to date. Government figures reveal that total receipts for 1982 amounted to 1,200 million cedis (1 Cedi = 2.75 dollars). Of this, some C200 million went into debt servicing (repayment of borrowed capital and interest), C700 million went towards other outstanding commitments, leaving a balance of some C300 million, the vast majority of which went towards the import of oil. Ghana, in real terms, was unable to pay for much needed resources and necessities to keep the economy alive. On top of this, it has been estimated that the cost of taking care of the expelled workers from Nigeria amounted to some 20 million dollars.

No doubt, the enemies of Ghana believed that the sudden influx of Ghanaians, together with the cost and organisation involved to house, feed and integrate the "returnees" within Ghana would mean the end of the revolution. This did not happen. Instead, the massive influx was organised and handled in an admirable manner, due in no small measure to the spirit of national resistance to defeat the counter-revolution and the organised expression of this through the local Defence Committees and the PNDC.

Political problems, fanned by internal reaction and hostility from international imperialism, have aggravated the problems of the December 1981 revolution. Those who waxed fat from the previous corrupt regimes have not accepted the revolution's aims and long for a restoration of the old days. They have organised themselves into emigre organisations in the neighbouring states and in the western capitals, equally keen to see a return to the days of monopoly super-profits unhampered by a popular democracy. The most serious counter-revolution was mounted in November 1982. Its failure has spurred the counter-revolutionaries to greater efforts. Ghana has repeatedly warned that serious attempts to break the revolution are being mounted from the neighbouring states and with the assistance of the enemies of the revolution from certain capitalist countries (need we ask who these are?). For example, reports are rife that an ex-major of the Ghanaian forces, based in London, has not only been trying to raise a mercenary force, but was actively influencing some of the "returnees" to work for the counter-revolution.

Defence Committees

There have also been problems of perspectives and strategy, long and short term, within the PNDC. This is inevitable, given the scope and character of the process of national reconstruction facing the people and the revolution. Such difference have led to fissures within the PNDC adding fuel to the counter-revolution's claims that the revolution is on the verge of collapse. The elaboration of a programme and strategy that would unite the mass of the people of Ghana remains paramount, if the revolution is to maintain its momentum.

A large measure of this momentum derives from the belief that Ghana "must break with the old order" and to achieve this objective "organs of power have been set up which aim at a greater participation of the people in a democratic process". It is within this perspective that both People's Defence Committees (PDC's) and Workers' Defence Committees (WDC's) were created nationwide. The democratic process had to be rooted in the involvement of the workers and the mass of the people. Among the working people the revolution enjoys full support, despite the economic difficulties faced by them primarily.

At the same time, the PNDC has introduced economic measures to curb the power of the monopolies and the national bourgeoisie, even after the negotiation of a successful loan from the IMF. The new economic plan envisages the nationalisation of the import-export trade. Foreign trade will be reorganised so that the economy is no longer reliant for 80% of trade on the western countries. Retail and distribution will be primarily organised through a nationwide network of cooperative stores. The state's holding in banking and insurance will be increased from 40% to 80%. Foreign controlled banks will be restricted in retail banking. Foreign investors will be allowed to transfer dividends as long as they were not engaged in industries that were foreign-exchange earners. Renegotiation of the terms of foreign firms is already under way. An example of this is the discussions with the US monopoly Valco (Volta Aluminium Smelting Company). The company pays a fixed income tax rate of 40% under the previous arrangement, whereas other companies are now subject to a rate of between 50 and 55%. The arrangement, which started in 1967, covers a period of 30 years, with a further option of 20 years.

Obviously, such agreements benefit only the monopolies and the Rawlings government is determined to break the stranglehold such groups and arrangements have on Ghana's economy.

There is no easy road for Ghana out of the web of political, economic and social problems. Yet some of the moves by the PNDC are indicative of a determination to break with "the old order". In this respect the cultural agreement which the government has entered into with both the Soviet Union and Bulgaria to increase cooperation in the fields of science, education, culture, radio, television, cinema and sports is an earnest of the determination to restructure Ghana's international relations.

There are difficult times ahead for the revolution in Ghana. To the extent that the Rawlings government can unite popular support around its programme of austere democracy based on the people's needs and aspirations, and to the extent that it can mobilise the mass of the people to defend the revolution, it has the chance of extricating Ghana from the political and economic mess the country has been cast into. To that extent it will strengthen the anti-imperialist advance on the African continent.

ETHIOPIA — TRAILBLAZER FOR THE AFRICAN REVOLUTION

by A.Azad

The revolutionary process unfolding in Africa attracts the attention of scientists, politicians and journalists throughout the world. Not surprisingly, the Ethiopian revolution which broke out in September 1974 has been subject to special scrutiny. In their book *The Ethiopian Revolution* (Verso Editions, London, 1981. Price £5.95), Fred Halliday and Maxine Molyneux attempt to analyse the causes and scope of the revolutionary changes in that country.

The authors are not hostile to the Ethiopian revolution. The book contains comprehensive details of the events leading up to the 1974 revolution, as well as the main social forces involved in it. The post-1974 events, and in particular, the developments within the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) or the Derg are also dealt with extensively.

In Chapter 2 "The Fall of the Ancien Regime", the reader is given a useful assessment of the historical background, the events leading up to the revolution and the main social forces involved in the struggle to bring about a revolutionary transformation. The authors point out that due to "continued predominance of pre-capitalist social and political relations, Ethiopia was marked by a very low level of integration at the material, economic and ideological levels." (p 61). 90 per cent of the people in the rural areas were subject to pre-capitalist property relations, with 2 per cent of the owners occupying 80 per cent of the land. It was, as the authors correctly point out, "the failure to resolve the agrarian question that undermined the imperial state in the end." (p 66)

As late as 1975, industrial production made up only 4 per cent of the gross domestic product. This was mainly concentrated in the food-processing and textile industries. Moreover, the country was seriously deficient in the communications infrastructure. It is interesting to note that out of the total foreign investments of $300 million in 1974, two-thirds was Italian and only $22 million American. But US military aid from 1952 to 1974 was over $270 million, and economic aid for the same period $350 million.

There is also an interesting assessment of the pre-revolutionary state apparatus, some useful explanations of how and why "the main agents of the 1974 revolution came from within the state sector . . . ." (p 72), and the different civilian opposition forces. Trade unionists in Africa would be most interested to learn about the clear links that existed between the African-American Labour Centre, a creature of the reactionary anti-communist AFL/CIO, the CIA and the ICFTU, and the Confederation of Ethiopian Labour Unions. Pages 88-95 also contain useful and interesting material on the "main characteristics of the revolutionary movement."

Land Reform

Chapters 3 and 4 cover the period from September 1974 up to mid-1981. Whilst mentioning the importance of mass pressure in deepening the revolutionary process, they do not analyse this aspect. However, the reader is given an objective account of some of the major socio-economic changes carried out by the new revolutionary government, particularly the land reform programme which was and is central to the revolutionary process in Ethiopia.

The authors point out some of the weaknesses of the land reform which initially benefitted the richer peasants. By 1979 new upper limits were set in the area of tenancy, and new conditions for the setting up of producers' co-operatives. The experience of Ethiopia in instituting an agrarian revolution may prove useful for many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In the section on the civilian opposition the authors correctly destroy the myth that the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) was a revolutionary Marxist organisation that was suppressed by a ruthless "fascist" military machine. It was the EPRP, with its outright hostility to the new revolutionary power and its mindless acts of terrorism, which was mainly responsible for the bloody confrontation which took place in some of the major cities in 1976 and 1977. Due to the firm stand taken by the Ethiopian government, the EPRP was crushed. Today some of the remnants operate in exile in the United States and Western Europe.

In Chapter 4 the authors produce a great amount of detail to explain the political and ideological developments. But since no real effort is made to distinguish important facts from trivia and even rumour or innuendo, it is difficult to know what importance should be given to this mass of detail. There is, however, an interesting section on the "Post-Revolutionary State". The authors quite rightly point out that in situations such as exist in Ethiopia, the state is to an unusual degree "autonomous" from the main classes in society. The state, as the authors point out, "is therefore both a reflection of the conflicts within society, the object of that conflict, and a means by which those concerned to transform society can hope to achieve their aims . . . ." (p 146). This section is the most interesting part of the book.

The book raises questions pertinent to the revolutionary process in Africa as a whole. This review concentrates on three main aspects:

1. The concept of revolution from above and connected to this, the theory and practice of socialist orientation or the socialist way of development;
2. The international dimensions;
3. The regional and national questions.

Revolution from Above

Although in their examination and analysis of the Ethiopian revolution the authors bring out the socio-economic context and motive forces of the revolution, their methodological approach is hampered by their rigid adherence to the concept of a revolution from above:

> "The central thesis of the concept 'revolution from above' is that profound transformations of social and political structures can occur in a particular country, meriting the term 'revolution' yet initiated and controlled not by a mass movement but by a sector of the pre-existing state apparatus." (p 24).

It is possible for a revolutionary act to be performed by a small group of people inside or outside the "pre-existing state apparatus." But once such an act occurs a process unfolds. Marxist-Leninists proceed from the understanding that the defence, consolidation and further deepening of the revolutionary process cannot occur, over a long period of time, without the active participation of the working people in the economic, political, ideological and cultural life of the country. To be sure, the policy of the new revolutionary power in all spheres of life is an important instrument of class struggle and has to be analysed in terms of whether or not it facilitates the preparations of the working class for the decisive role it has to play in the construction of socialism.

In attempting to differentiate between anti-colonial and post- colonial revolutions, the authors incorrectly argue that in the latter the primary target is not foreign domination but local class forces and that their overthrow "involved a correspondingly greater and deeper transformation of the society in question." (p 18).

It is true that in the post-colonial situation the class conflicts and interests are more open and obvious. Notwithstanding this, imperialism, in particular US imperialism, remains the main enemy and primary target of revolutionary forces in independent Africa. In the vast majority of African countries the main content of the struggle is not for socialism but against imperialism for the fulfilment of the tasks of the national democratic revolution. Nevertheless the revolutionary experience of Angola and Mozambique demonstrates that a successful anti-colonial national liberation struggle can lead to deep socio-economic transformations.

Above all, Halliday and Molyneux underestimate the role of imperialism and its agencies such as the multi-nationals and the CIA. One of the main elements in imperialism's strategy in the "Third World" is the destabilisation and overthrow of revolutionary governments. But as we shall see later, the authors' criticism is directed, not at the imperialist powers who are really responsible for the oppression and exploitation of our peoples, but at the Soviet Union.

In the concluding chapter "A State of Socialist Orientation" they begin by making a number of noteworthy assessments of the "dimension of the problem" concerning Ethiopia. They bring out the forces both for and against revolutionary transformations. But then they claim, without offering a shred of evidence, that the Soviet Union wishes to impose a "Soviet model" on Ethiopia. In fact Soviet communists and scientists consistently insist that each revolution has its own specific peculiarities, characteristics and features; that no model can be imposed on any country. Obviously there are objective laws in the construction of socialism which regulate the functioning of the economy and which should not be ignored.

They accuse the Soviet Union of moving from the theory of the non-capitalist path to socialist orientation because of difficulties in showing how this transition would work and "political disappointments" with some countries. The truth is not so sinister. Over the years the world communist movement has accumulated a great deal of experience about the theory and practice of the transition period leading to the first phase of socialist construction, Moroever the revolutionary developments in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Afghanistan, Grenada and other countries have given new insights into this process and furnished different types of experiences.

In the period of revolutionary transition positive and negative features arise, mistakes are made and in one or more countries the revolutionary forces suffer serious reversals. Briefly, let us mention some of these negative features:

1 .Within the state apparatus a new balance of forces may arise in which the initiative no longer rests with the revolutionary forces.

2. State power is not homogeneous and there is a constant confrontation between those who represent and uphold the interests of the working people, and those who seek to steer the country in the direction of capitalism and closer alliance with imperialism.

3. In many countries the middle strata, who are numerically quite large and not homogeneous in ideological positions, play the dominant role. There is therefore a social basis for the penetration of reformist social democratic ideas. Here we should not underestimate the role played by European Social Democracy in disseminating views which are hostile to Marxism-Leninism.

4. The growth and role of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. This fraction of the bourgeois class emerges in some socialist-oriented countries by using their positions in the upper echelons of the state apparatus to accumulate capital. They are in fact the main internal enemy of the revolutionary forces. The bureaucratic bourgeoisie is, as Brutens says,

> "especially dangerous because in countries with a socialist orientation it is to a great extent composed of degenerating elements of revolutionary democracy and can in effect serve as a 'transmission belt' between revolutionary democracy and neo-colonialists and groups oriented towards capitalism. The growth of kulak elements frequently brings in its train a strengthened position for those factions of revolutionary democracy that already represent the well-to-do elements of the village." (*National Revolutions Today*, 2 volumes K.N. Brutens, Progress Publishers, Moscow. Volume 2, p 220.)

The transition from pre-capitalism or low-level capitalist development to socialism is an objective process which may be accelerated or retarded, depending on the internal regional and international balance of forces.

The International Dimensions

Using a typically bourgeois approach the authors attempt to examine the international context of the Ethiopian revolution by a recital of facts, some of which are dubious, to say the least. They imply that there is no qualitative class difference in the relations entered into with the "Third

World" by the imperialist and the socialist community. But what is the truth?

To begin with, imperialism does all it can to retain the present unequal and exploitative world capitalist division of labour. Nor has it stopped its plunder of the natural resources of the developing countries. The Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community have no capital investments, own no land, property or factories in these countries. The prices of minerals and agricultural products produced by the developing countries are determined by monopoly capital in London, New York and Paris and not in Moscow.

Any genuine endeavour to carry through radical social changes in any country is also dependent upon the level of the world revolutionary process, a process which is determined by the competition between the two world systems, socialism and capitalism. In this sense the assistance given by the socialist countries, which is naturally dependent upon their own resources and capacities, is a crucial factor. Revolutions can neither be imported nor exported. Any revolution has its specific national characteristics and occurs within a defined geographical territory. The internal balance of forces is the most crucial factor. On the other hand in some cases international factors may be of decisive significance. To be sure, any country which tried to break its dependent ties with the world capitalist system would need to strengthen its relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

We do not expect the authors to accept the theory and practice of proletarian internationalism, but an attempt to assess the role of the socialist countries should take into account the ideological basis of this support. For communists, proletarian internationalism is an organic part of their theoretical and practical political life and work.

Whilst the book contains some interesting information on how successive US administrations viewed Ethiopia strategically and politically, the authors ignore the nature and character of imperialist intervention, aggression and conspiracies. Nor do they make any attempt to analyse US imperialist policies in the light of the interests of different fractions of US monopoly capital. It is not possible to explain changes in the strategy and policy of US imperialism by merely taking at face value the policy statements of politicians, including the President. This line of reasoning leads them to the ridiculous conclusion that the USA "lost" Ethiopia because it did not sufficiently encourage Haile Selassie "to resolve the contradictions within Ethiopian society." (p 225). Halliday and Molyneux do not even mention the activities of the multi-national companies and the CIA who are permanently engaged in attempts to destabilise progressive governments.

What is Democracy?

The authors' anti-Sovietism comes through clearly even though they try to camouflage it with sophisticated words and arguments. Their starting point is that the Soviet Union is a socialist country only in an economic sense, since in the political sphere there is no democracy. They do not explain what they mean by democracy. Surely the right to a job, shelter, education, health care and old age security, guaranteed in the Soviet Union, is central to any discussion on democracy? The authors, however, ignore these great achievements of the Soviet Union.

In their treatment of this topic they produce a whole series of assertions without giving a single shred of evidence. They direct the reader to footnotes, referring to some book or other. But we may well ask, "Who are these authors from whom you accept 'facts'?"

Let us take a brief look at some of their bland anti-Soviet assertions. "The Ethiopian revolution itself was to be shaped, positively and negatively, by the character of the assistance it received from the USSR and its allies." (p 23). The "negative" is not explained except to analyse certain developments within the Provisional Military Government (PMAC) from an anti-Soviet point of view. They state that a pro-Soviet faction sought to impose a "Soviet model" on Ethiopia, that Mengistu held up the formation of a Party because he wanted to prevent "a pro-Soviet faction" from gaining control, and "at best" a "Soviet model" would have "the economic features of that mode of production (socialist), but would also exhibit political deformations, denying appropriate freedoms to both the working class and the peasantry, and to the nationalities." (p 252)

They also claim that the "imposition of orthodox Soviet theory" (p 281) on women involved on the part of the Ethiopian revolutionaries is a "distinct ideological retreat from the earlier positions." No attempt is made to examine and analyse the place and role of women in Soviet society. Certainly this question has not been fully resolved in the Soviet Union, but no other country can compare with the advances made by women in all spheres of life in the Soviet Union.

The reader is also told that the Italian fascist invasion of Ethiopia and the Italian-Ethiopian war of 1935-1936 were dismissed by Stalin as an "episode". We are told that the Soviet Union refused to impose oil sanctions on Italy and prevented the Comintern from organising a "joint communist-socialist campaign on the issue" (p 238). These claims cannot go unchallenged. First of all it was the Soviet Union — and only the Soviet Union — which demanded that Italy be branded as an aggressor and subject to sanctions under the League of Nations Covenant. It was the Soviet Union which condemned the Hoare-Laval (British-French) plan which would have compromised Ethiopian sovereignty. It was the Soviet Red Cross which supplied Ethiopia with material and moral support. It was the energetic involvement of the Soviet Union which secured the invitation of the Ethiopian delegation to take part in discussions at the League of Nations.

These facts are well documented in an article in the book *USSR and Countries of Africa*, Progress Publications, Moscow, 1980, pp 42-46. Moreover it was the world communist movement which led the fight against the Italian fascist invasion. Communists throughout the world, including South Africa, organised demonstrations, rallies and material support for the Ethiopians.

Another unsubstantiated claim is contained in a footnote on p 283. The authors allege that one of the factors limiting Soviet development aid is "the unpopularity of foreign aid with a Soviet population itself exposed to consumer shortages." From our own experience and that of other national liberation and working class movements we know of the unstinted, constant and principled support of the Soviet Union. This could never have been possible unless the Soviet people freely and voluntarily supported this. One has only to visit the Soviet Union and discuss with the working people to realise how deeply they feel their commitment in the best spirit of proletarian internationalism. Through the Peace Fund of the Soviet Solidarity Committees millions of Soviet men and women voluntarily make financial contributions. Many leaders of the national liberation movements have publicly expressed their appreciation to the Soviet Union for its disinterested material, political, military, diplomatic and moral support.

The Regional and National Question

Here we deal only with the conflict in Eritrea. In this book there is a useful summary of the declared positions of the PMAC, of the different Eritrean organisations and groups such as the EPRP. Halliday and Molyneux make the significant point that Eritrea never existed as a nation and that within the territory called Eritrea there are ten distinct language groups and also different religious groups. They present the problem as follows:

> "All Eritrean groups are committed to full independence and have appeared unwilling to compromise on that. For its part the PMAC has refused to countenance separation by Eritrea, for at least three major reasons: Eritrea is seen as an important component of the historic territory of Ethiopia; it provides Ethiopia with its access to the sea; and the demonstration effect of Eritrean independence on the rest of multi-national Ethiopia would be catastrophic." (pp 173-174).

There is a concise account of the "Political Character of the Eritrean Guerillas" (pp 182-193). On p 182 the reader is given a brief informative account of the different organisations that have sprung up since 1960, all of them formed as a result of splits. By 1976 there were three main ones, the Eritrean Liberation Front, the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Eritrean Liberation Front-Popular Liberation Front (ELF-PLF). The authors bring out the fragmentary character of these organisations which led to the death of hundreds in internal clashes and also the significant fact that not one of them had or has a coherent political strategy or programme. They are motivated only by their hatred of the new Ethiopian revolutionary government which they characterise as "fascist" and they demand the secession of Eritrea.

As the authors point out, the escalation of violent actions by the organisations based in Eritrea occurred after the 1974 revolution and reached its peak in 1976. This was not by chance, as this was the period when the very existence of the Ethiopian revolution was in mortal danger. Within the PMAC a bitter conflict was being waged between the revolutionary forces and those who sought a capitalist path of development. At the same time the feudal and big merchant groups and the ultra-leftists had stepped up their anti-government activities including acts of terrorism and indiscriminate killings.

At that time — and such a tendency may still survive — there were powerful groups within the PMAC which favoured a military rather than a political solution. In the situation facing the PMAC in 1977 when it faced armed revolts in 12 out of 14 provinces, invasion from Somalia and counter-revolutionary terrorist acts in the capital Addis Ababa, political innovations and initiatives with regard to Eritrea were very difficult if not impossible. Nevertheless throughout that period and later, both within the PMAC and outside it, the revolutionary forces were really interested in a voluntary political solution to the conflict.

If the organisations in Eritrea were genuinely concerned with the welfare of the people of Eritrea and other parts of the country, if, as some claim, there was a strong Marxist-Leninist tendency within these organisations, then they would have recognised the political and class opportunities opened up by the 1974 revolution. But instead of entering into negotiations and thereby facilitating a political solution, they intensified their armed actions which were objectively counter-revolutionary. It is a mistake to assume that any organisation that uses the technique of guerilla warfare is therefore revolutionary. Nor is it an exaggeration to say that an Eritrea "independent" of socialist-oriented Ethiopia would inevitably become a reactionary state dependent upon US imperialism and Arab reaction. Above all it would have led to the further division of Ethiopia on ethnic lines. The Ethiopian government had no choice but to pursue for a limited period a military course of action. The alternative was disintegration.

Empty Rhetoric

It is to their credit that Halliday and Molyneux, despite their wrong approach, expose the shallowness and empty rhetoric of the organisations based in Eritrea. However they do not pay sufficient attention to that powerful tendency within the PMAC which consistently sought and continues to seek a political solution. This was emphasised at the beginning of last year by the launching of the Red Star Development Campaign of Eritrea. This campaign is based on the Asmara Declaration which is a seven point manifest adopted by 58 organisations. This campaign has scored limited but important successes in introducing political reforms, peasants' associations and rehabilitating some parts of the economy which were devastated by the armed gangs.

It would be naive to expect that all the problems can be solved, and the feelings of mistrust assuaged, in one year. This will take time. In implementing the declaration, mistakes may be made. In some cases the declared policy may not be implemented by the people on the ground. However, the most striking feature of the campaign is the forthright recognition that unity must be voluntary and founded on equality. Indeed it is precisely in the course of such a campaign that those who still hanker after a military solution can be defeated.

On this question the book contains distortions of the positions of the Sudanese Communist Party, South African Communist Party and the Soviet Union. On p 261 they allege that the Sudanese Communist Party supported the secession of Eritrea. On the contrary, the Sudanese

Communist Party supports the territorial integrity of Ethiopia, the defence and consolidation of this revolution and calls for a peaceful political solution. On the same page the authors (who wrongly refer to the SACP as the Communist Party of South Africa) claim "there were those within its following" (whatever this means) "who favoured the programme of the EPRP and the right of the Eritreans to self-determination." Later they write with some surprise that an African party geographically removed from the area did not "take up a more measured stance." (p 262).

Since no names are mentioned and not a single Party document is cited, this allegation against the South African Communists cannot be substantiated. The SACP has always been guided by a class approach and not some nebulous "measured stance" which, incidentally, the authors utilise to declare a plague on everybody's houses.

The SACP and the ANC supported the Ethiopian revolution and continue to do so because it is one of the great African revolutions which needs and deserves the solidarity of all anti-imperialist forces. A defeat for this revolution would be a setback for the region, Africa and the world revolutionary process. The OAU charter calls for the recognition of the old colonial boundaries and for conflicts to be solved peacefully by negotiation.

The national question in Africa cannot be separated from the entire range of issues connected with the radical socio-economic transformation of society.

In neo-colonial countries the acute socio-economic contraditions are intimately connected with the contradictions arising from the oppression of nationalities and ethnic groups. Given this legacy, it is possible for non-revolutionary forces and imperialism to use the justified and legitimate demands for national equality in all spheres of life to launch campaigns which threaten the very existence of a revolution and the territorial integrity of the country. Therefore a political solution of this question remains central.

Any revolutionary government should be acutely sensitive to the views, grievances and aspirations of ethnic groups and nationalities which feel oppressed. These socio-psychological factors should never be underestimated. As Lenin wrote:

> "Our experience has left us with the firm conviction that only exclusive attention to the interests of various nations can remove grounds for conflicts, can remove mutual mistrust, can remove the fear of intrigues, and create the confidence, especially on the part of workers and peasants speaking different languages,

> without which there absolutely cannot be peaceful relations between peoples or anything like a successful development of everything that is of value in present day civilisation." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 386).

Halliday and Molyneux, in their anti-Soviet and anti-communist zeal, do not even give consideration to the theoretical approach of Marxist-Leninists. They resort to distortions of the nationalities policies of the Soviet Union. On p 39 and p 169 they accuse the Bolsheviks of suppressing "nationality movements that had clear legitimacy" and of not implementing "the principles first enunciated." We are also told that "the international socialist movement.... deplored Soviet and Cuban policies in the Horn" (p 211). For a reply to these distortions, we refer the reader to the article by Sitheli Khwelemthini in *The African Communist*, No 91, 1982. This article clearly demonstrates the great achievements of the Soviet Union in resolving the national question.

Halliday and Molyneux do not explain what or who constitute the "international socialist movement". The overwhelming majority of the world communist movement, democratic international organisations, non-communist revolutionary forces in Africa and elsewhere have endorsed the proletarian internationalist support given by Cuba, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries to revolutionary Ethiopia.

The anti-Soviet and anti-communist bias displayed by the authors in this book means that, despite their display of scholarship, they have been unable to deal adequately with some of the most burning problems confronting the national and social liberation movements in Africa.

§§

The South African Negro masses are realising that the only way out of imperialist bondage and economic misery is the revolutionary way out — a South African Black Republic as a stage towards a Workers' and Peasants' Republic.

Albert Nzula, 1931

§§

BOOK REVIEWS

PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM IS VALID FOR AFRICA

Problems of Socialism: The Nigerian Challenge by Eddie Madunagu. (Zed Press London, 1982.)

For over four decades now, the labour and communist movement in Nigeria has been treading a very difficult terrain, having to confront extremely unfavourable objective and subjective conditions: a low level of development of the productive forces in the capitalist, but predominantly comprador, sector, pre-capitalist relations in parts of the countryside, the yet to be resolved nationalities question with the accompanying ethnic ideology, other forms of false consciousness, etc. Under these conditions, the establishment of the Socialist Workers' and Farmers' Party (SWAFP) in 1963, the General Strike of 1964 and more recent similar struggles, are certainly an organisational feat. The same conditions, however, explain the failure so far to sustain the momentum and to continually elevate the struggle to higher levels politically and organisationally. These conditions are equally responsible for the divisions within a fragmented movement, the atomised character and class background of the leadership and the existence of harmful ideological tendencies and practices.

With the end of the 13-year military rule in 1979, the deepening of the economic crisis and the ensuing barbaric onslaught on workers' rights and existence gave rise to a new situation and posed new challenges to the movement. Indeed, the intensification of the class struggle in the country demands the further development of appropriate organisational structures, new methods and forms of struggle, a sharpening of tactics and strategy. Unity on the basis of a common social-liberation programme has become a condition for the effectiveness and credibility of the movement as a whole.

Eddie Madunagu's timely and polemical contribution — *Problems of Socialism: The Nigerian Challenge* — is a welcome addition to a rather scanty and piecemeal literature on the matter. The brochure is divided into two parts. Part One (Nigeria Today) provides the socio-economic and political background for analysis in Part Two (A Critique of the Nigerian Left). In particular, the first part traces the slow process of formation of a ruling class as a self-conscious class; the role of the military in this process, especially the imposition of a bourgeois constitution (correctly identified as "fascistic in content, but liberal in form") and the severe restrictions on the trade union movement simultaneously with the opening up of new opportunities for local capital through 'indigenisation'; the "farcical" 1979 elections, which increased bourgeois hegemony and strengthened at the centre an otherwise feeble unity silencing at the same time the socialist opposition at least at the parliamentary level; the ethnic minority question both at the level of ruling class manipulation (bourgeois unity by trading ethnic cards for individual privileges) and the task confronting the revolutionary movement; and the use of oil money to further impoverish and expropriate the working people in urban and rural areas.

The recent history of Nigeria thus reveals, even by a cursory look, which the author has opted for, an unprecedented intensification of class contradictions accompanied by increasing state brutality and a multiplication of the predominantly spontaneous or localised (and thus little effective) workers' and peasants' resistance.

The Need for Unity

What is the main task under the circumstances confronting all socialists in the country? The author has no difficulty in putting forward, in Part Two, the correct answer: To unify all individual/micro-collective efforts at a higher, and countrywide, level of organisational and political unity. Similar attempts in the past fell short of expectations and, in some respects, left the movement even more divided at the end. The brochure, therefore, sets out to review critically the history of the quest for left unity with a view to identifying the causes of past and present disunity, the errors in tactics and the "pseudo-socialist prescriptions" which block the way ahead. Madunagu rounds off his critique by offering his answer to the question 'What is to be done?' and making his own proposals for the building of an "Authentic Nigerian Socialist Movement".

The importance of these questions for the international communist movement as a whole compels us to offer in a comradely exchange the following views beyond the scope of a usual review.

1. *Leadership, Opportunism and the Proletariat.* Taking his analysis as a whole, one can say that Madunagu underestimates the objective causes of opportunism. Inevitably he ends up by declaring, in one single blow, particular leaderships "discredited" (which may well be) *and* the organisational structures they head (particularly trade unions) irrelevant. Such a critic is, 'therefore', justified to set up his own parochial "alternative" structure — thereby fostering more centrifugal tendencies in the base in the illusion of fostering a new unity. As a matter of fact, 'alternative' structures had been established in the country before the new wave of 'alternative' structures.

It might be preferable, however, to examine closely all circumstances surrounding the phenomenon in order to propose, and fight for, an adequate therapy, which may take the form of appropriate democratisation, stronger forms of accountability, more workers' control, etc. In the absence of irreconcilable ideological divisions, inter-organisational principled struggle is a necessary condition for achieving higher forms of unity. Madunagu's relatively disproportional treatment of the subjective aspect of the leadership issues (if this is the most important problem now facing the movement) tends to reduce the problems of socialism in the country to problems of the country's inter-socialist leadership and to present the problems of individuals as the problems of the Nigerian proletariat.

2. *Party — People's Democratic Revolution — Transition to Socialism.* "Is there a class struggle in Nigeria?". Madunagu answers the question in the only way this is possible — positively — and concludes: "Classes and class struggles exist in Nigeria. They exist under the noses of our academics who recognize them only in textbooks" (p. 95). In spite of this assessment, however, he believes that "the Nigerian socialist movement (or even the idea of it) has not transcended its historical problems, and therefore, has not created the conditions for the resurgence of organised socialist practice in Nigeria" (p. 69). Accordingly, he stands for the creation of a new *centre*

to work towards the formation of a party "when the material, ideological and political conditions for its existence had been created" (p. 69)! An explanation for this posture can be provided by the curious reversal discussed under 1 above, namely, the tendency to approach the subject-matter (problems of socialism in Nigeria) through the prism of conflicting leaderships rather than vice versa.

The most controversial issue, however, may prove to be Madunagu's conception of a Leninist party under conditions prevailing in Nigeria: "Leninism demands that we should proceed from the present situation *in Nigeria* and demonstrate *anew* in what general respects the Leninist conception of a revolutionary party is applicable to Nigeria and in what respects it fails to apply" (p. 100) (Mandunagu's emphasis). Proceeding from this premise, but without demonstrating what is *the* special factor in Nigeria that warrants the dropping or modification of Leninist party-building principles, Madunagu advances the following theses:

(i) Formation of a "separate Marxist socialist organisation, party, movement or group" (p. 103), which

(ii) in alliance with other parties, or as a vanguard (p. 103),

(iii) will ensure "an ever increasing expansion and strengthening of areas of popular and democratic control of social *production* and *distribution* by the working populations" (p. 103) (emphasis mine) such as, e.g., independent workers' co-operatives and their participation in production and decision-making, setting up peasants' collectives, direct representation of workers and peasants in the various organs of state power, etc. (p. 104).

A catastrophic confusion of guerilla tactics (in *liberated* or semi-liberated areas) with party-building (under conditions of bourgeois *domination*); and even of utopian with scientific socialism, has been committed here. (N.B. Cited with apparent approval in many parts of the work are such diverse sources as Trotsky and Bettelheim, Samir Amin and Debray, Lenin and an assortment of neo-Marxists.) While inevitable after the socialist transition, the existence of "areas of popular and democratic control of social *production* and *distribution* by the working populations", let alone the "strengthening" of such areas, cannot possibly be conceived under the domination of the capitalist state. Were this possible, capitalism would have been a past memory long ago.

Of course, there is no magic or romantic short-cut to socialism. It would be a grave mistake, indeed, if the party were to dissipate its efforts in utopian economism (production — distribution) and lose sight of the primary political-strategic objective: the capture of state power by the workers. The party is the highest form of *political* organisation of the working class co-ordinating at that decisive level the collective effort of the proletariat to become the dominant class in society, thereby liberating itself and society at large from the clutches of exploitation and alienation. At other levels — the factory-floor, the farm, the area of the marketing board, the trade union, the professional, women's, artists' and students' association, in short, at the economic and cultural levels — the working class and its allies organise themselves to defend acquired rights, improve living and working conditions and raise their collective consciousness and solidarity in the arena of class struggle.

There is a close dialectical link between these base organisations in the spheres of production, distribution, services and consumption and the party as such. The party is influenced by the activities of these organisations which at a given time pinpoint the immediate problems facing the working people and, in turn, influence, by a multitude of means, the direction, unity and struggle of these organisations towards even higher forms of consciousness and organisation. Each party member is, at the same time, a full-time organiser in the labour, peasant, youth and all other fields.

The unavoidable effect of the Madunagu theses (particularly thesis no. iii) is to deny the need for a Leninist Party as the collective political expression of the working class and based on principles of democratic centralism, party discipline, criticism and self-criticism, etc. (see p. 99). The said theses *replace* the Leninist Party with a very different — and undefined — alternative because of unnamed special Nigerian conditions. Madunagu acknowledges, however, "the. . . particular neo-colonial. . . phenomenon of very strong post-colonial state apparatuses standing guard over backward economic productive forces. . . which (apparatuses) in most cases have been specially equipped by imperialism" (p. 107) and he repeatedly underlines the need for locating "the specific problems of socialist transformation in Nigeria within a global perspective" (pp. 1, 86, 89). If these correct findings constitute 'special Nigerian conditions', one can but conclude that there is a need for an even stronger and better organised Marxist-Leninist Party with closer than hitherto ties with the organised world communist movement on the only possible basis: genuine equality and proletarian internationalism.

As "An invitation to inaugurate a new phase of debate", *Problems of Socialism: The Nigerian Challenge* will certainly succeed. Whether the same can be said for the thesis advanced therein is doubtful.

Christos Theodoropoulos

HISTORY AS A TOOL FOR REVOLUTION

Historians and Africanist History: A Critique, by A Temu and B. Swai (Zed Press, London, 1982. Price £16.95)

The independence of Ghana in 1957 and the subsequent liberation of almost the whole of the continent released divergent forces which sought, in their own ways, to interpret African reality. The academic field is one of these battlefields.

In this book the authors deal with an aspect of this reality — the interpretation of African history. Professor Arnold Temu and Dr Bonaventure Swai are Tanzanian historians now lecturing in Nigeria. This explains the slant of the book which is heavily loaded with examples from East African history. Not that this is a weakness. On the contrary, this is the sturdy scaffolding required to support so much detail.

The book deals with the problems confronting Africanists and African historians or, to be more precise, African history. The problems are enormous. Though they are specifically related to the field of history, they seem to have a broader connotation, a universal aspect.

The problem affecting African history is that there is a crisis in African history and this crisis is a reflection of a broader crisis of bourgeois historiography of which African history, as it is interpreted today, is an appendage:

> "Professionalization of the study of the African past . . . commenced in the imperialist countries. There also, it was institutionalized before it found its way into Africa under metropolitan tutelage. Africanization of the profession did not begin seriously until the 1960's. In this process the West African was ahead of East and Central Africa, for reasons which are best explained in terms of the backwardness of the latter's petty bourgeoisie." (p. 50)

The authors state quite categorically:

> "What is crucial is not merely to show change or continuity in African history but also the social and historical content of that change" (p 51).

The authors discuss the pessimism in professional African history which, they argue, commenced with the onset of the crisis in the discipline and this was symptomatic of a deeper crisis within the post-colonial African social formations (p 64). They argue that nineteenth-century confidence in professional history has given way to pessimism, so much so that even facts are now doubted. (p. 119).

Then there emerged what they call intellectual McCarthyism:

> "Small wonder, then, that side by side with the development of post-colonial Africanist historiography has developed a crescendo of intellectual McCarthyism." (p 53).

The authors discuss a whole range of concepts and views, form and content of African history, and hows and whys, partisanship, the development of underdevelopment theory, nihilism, social Darwinism and other bourgeois concepts. They state:

> "There is a sense in which the birth of professional Africanist history has been compared to the establishment of bourgeois scientific historiography in the nineteenth century. But while bourgeois scientific historiography comprised part of the epistemological rupture with scholasticism, the African historiographical revolution was intended to perpetuate the bourgeois historiographical path. In this respect its declared break with colonial historiography is mythical, but it is a myth which has been useful in creating the illusion of independence with which the African petty bourgeoisies have liked to associate themselves..." (p. 99).

They note:

> "But nothing has been so anticolonial or anti-European, at least in terms of verbal ferocity, as nationalism. Much history, therefore, has been reduced to this nationalistic form, or variants of it." (p. 155)

and warn:

> "Cosmetic surgery is not intended to arrest old age but to disguise its appearance." (p 169)

This book is not just a critique. It makes useful suggestions on how to get out of this crisis. One of the problems facing Africa is that books by Marx, Engels and Lenin are not readily available. This perhaps explains why, in this book, the classics of Marxism are quoted mostly via a second source. Our ignorance of the languages spoken in the socialist countries, where the historians have made admirable progress in research on African history, is always a handicap. The weakness and illiteracy of the labour movement on the African continent are not conducive to the production of radical African historians.

Despite these problems, this book is a step in the right direction. It is an effort to raise the voice of the young but growing African anti-imperialist historians. It is factual, realistic in that it does not glorify the African past, knowledgeable and original. Some passages are a delight to read.

The authority — in the best sense of the word — of the authors stems from their conviction that historical facts in the hands of the oppressed becme a powerful tool for revolutionary mobilisation. They do not actually say this but their book demonstrates its validity.

Nyawuza

MIGRANT LABOUR ON THE GOLD MINES

The Foundations of the South African Cheap Labour System by Norman Levy (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1982. Price £15.95).

It is commonplace that the massive accumulation of capital and the rapid development of capitalism in South Africa over the past century have rested, above all, on gold-mining. This, in turn, has rested on the super-exploitation of African migrant workers drawn both from within South Africa as well as from other African countries.

It is only in recent years, however, that Marxist historians have begun to pose questions about the cheap labour system in gold-mining. Why, for example, did wage labour take the form of a migrant labour force rather than a fully proletarianized work-force? What were the conditions and struggles under which the system was instituted and how was it organised? What was the role of, first, the Kruger state and, later, the Milner state in establishing and consolidating the system of migrant labour?

Norman Levy's book represents an important and substantial attempt to deal with these questions by focusing, in particular, on the origins of the migrant labour system after the discovery of gold in 1886 and its development and consolidation over the following twenty years,

Levy's historical account is based on two contentions drawn from the existing literature. The first of these relates to the nature and conditions of gold-mining which determine the costs of production. The geological situation of the gold-bearing ores made them difficult to get at and costly to mine. For the same reason, production could not be equally mechanized and was, therefore, labour intensive. The costs of stores, equipment and means of production being established on the commodity markets were outside of the control of the mines and, finally, the price of gold was fixed on the international markets and not by the gold producers. In these circumstances, the possibility of holding down, indeed, of reducing working costs was dependent on the lowering of wages. The struggle to win an adequate supply of African workers and to reduce wage levels became the central concern of the gold producers.

The second contention is that the migrant labour system provided the necessary foundation for the development of gold production by making available a supply of ultra-cheap labour power. Migrant labour is cheap because the costs of reproducing the working class are, in part, met by agricultural production carried on by the migrant's family and this enables the gold mines to pay wages calculated on the needs of the individual worker. Levy sums up the argument as follows:

> "One of the advantages of the migrant system, for the mine owners, was therefore that it enabled them — constrained as they were by the constant price of gold and the relative inflexibility of mining techniques — to calculate wage rates around the level of subsistence of the *individual miner* rather than the cost of his total family subsistence. It was evident that a single migrant could live on a lower wage than he could if his family were with him on the Rand and dependent on him. Instead, the small surplus received from the land contributed to his family welfare and helped to ensure the reproduction of the labour supply." (p 19)

Starting from this basis, Levy proceeds to provide an historical account of the efforts of the gold producers to obtain an adequate supply of African migrant labour, to reduce wages and to involve the state in support of these activities in two different periods — in the period from 1886 until the Boer War, and in the period after the war until 1906.

Competition for Labour

The book shows that, in the first period, a necessary condition of maintaining low wage levels was the elimination of competition for African labour between the different gold mines, for the struggle to obtain adequate supplies of labour frequently led to the offer of higher wages. The Chamber of Mines took over "The function of co-ordinating the labour strategies and maximizing the opportunities for the profitability of all the mines on the Witwatersrand. ." (p 27).

Once agreement was reached on common wage levels between the mining companies, the way was open for the Chamber to develop, as Levy shows in detail, an array of organizations and institutions to ensure the supply and control of African labour, while, at the same time, systematically reducing wage levels.

The problem of labour supplies was, however, never ending for the very condition which made possible cheap migrant labour — the existence of African rural production — was also the condition which retarded African entry into the labour market. From an early date, the Chamber of Mines realised that the acquisition and control of the labour supply required the intervention of the state. But, Levy argues, the Kruger state, representing the interests of white farmers, was unable or unwilling to give full effect to the interests of gold mining capital. Here, indeed, is the prime cause of the Boer War — the demand of mining capital for a regime to serve its interests.

Resort to the Chinese

The defeat of the Boers did, in fact, lead to the installation of the Milner regime whose major concern was to provide the conditions for the development of the mining industry. Despite this, the mines experienced a severe labour shortage. This was due to a number of factors: desertion from the mines because of the war; a certain redistribution of land to Africans after the war; competition from other sectors of the economy and the further reduction of wages for African workers. In this context, an intense debate occurred over alternative sources of labour.

The mines rejected the proposal to employ whites as unskilled labourers as this would be too expensive and, instead, following the opening provided by the findings of the Transvaal Native Labour Commission, opted to obtain indentured Chinese labour. Levy concludes by showing how the employment of cheap, indentured Chinese labour provided an important condition for the employment of African labour at reduced wages once economic conditions resulted in an increased flow of Africans to the mines.

The detailed account of the changing conditions of labour supplies, the organizational and control policies followed by the mines and the relationship between the mines and the state are of considerable interest and illuminate concretely the mechanisms by which the supply of cheap labour became established through the system of migrant labour. What is less satisfactory, however, is the explanation as to why cheap labour became supplied through a system of migrant labour. What Levy argues is that because the mines required low cost labour *therefore* it took the form of migrant labour. This is quite inadequate for a number of reasons but not least because it assumes that what is in the intersts of mining capital in fact occurs. That is to say, it becomes unnecesary to analyse the conditions and struggles through which interests are given effect.

Levy's whole analysis of the obstacles which the mining companies had continuously to overcome to obtain African labour leads us to ask why no attempt was made to dispossess Africans of means of production in the land and to create a fully proletarianized reserve army of labour. Levy does not pose this question, he simply assumes the answer. What is required, however, is an analysis of the political and economic conditions in South Africa as a whole — colonial policy, possibilities of expropriation of African land, situation in white agriculture and so on — and, in particular in the African areas which are relevant to the resistance of Africans to the instrusions of capitalism. Levy does not make this analysis but his work, nonetheless, allows us to raise these questions.

E.S.

WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE

Women and Resistance in South Africa, by Cheryl Walker. (Onyx Press, London. Price £5.95.)

Cheryl Walker's book is about women's organisations and the organisation of women in South Africa, a history which unfolds not upon the basis of a feminist consciousness, but rather is shaped by conditions of national oppression and class exploitation. The primary focus is upon the Federation of South African Women (FSAW) formed on 17th April, 1954, and the existence of which runs parrallel to but is not identical with the massive anti-pass resistance by women of the fifties. The first half of the book is devoted to a brief overview of women's organisations prior to the formation of FSAW, a period she describes as both formative and important even though, due both to the objective conditions in which women found themselves as well as the basic social assumptions about the role of women in society — that politics was men's business — there was neither large-scale nor sustained participation of women in politics.

The questions she poses are derived from concerns of the feminist movement in the contemporary period and it is in this approach that both the strengths and weaknesses of her work lie. The strengths, and these cannot be overstated, spring from her pioneering endeavour to recover from history the role and contribution women have made to our liberation struggle. This she does in a substantial way, adding detail to events and dates which are already popularly known, and at the same time uncovering a rich history of struggle which has been made invisible by the standard history books. She writes:

> "Women featured prominently in many of the grassroots movements and campaigns that centred around...home issues...the passivity of women historically is not so much that they did not take part in political movements, as that frequently their involvement has been overlooked by both contemporary observers and later researchers. It seems, more than is generally realised, that in many townships there is a long tradition of female protest which becomes reactivated in times of crisis." (p75)

Assumptions about women and particularly black women lie at the root of this 'oversight'. On the one hand 'home issues' are not considered to be 'political issues', or because of the social position women occupy in society, issues in which they are involved are, on the other hand, deemed less significant than those in which men are engaged. This is further compounded by racism and national oppression, graphically illustrated in the account Walker gives of an address by Charlotte Maxeke to the Women's Reform Club in Pretoria, where, when she began to speak, the reporters sat back and stopped taking notes! By their action her statement on the conditions and problems facing black women in the towns was simply brushed off the record.

Turning to the question of consciousness about women's oppression — feminist consciousness — Walker's work reveals the Communist Party of South Africa to have been the most advanced political organisation of the time in this sphere. Not only had it established a women's department by 1931, but it recognised the need to organise women as women. In June of that year it called for a Women's National Conference with the aim:

> "to unify and consolidate the sectional struggle of women...and in order to bring into existence a permanent organisation of struggle for the working women of South Africa." (p51)

Although impossible to realise at that time, it was a goal for which communists worked tirelessly and it was in this idea that the seeds of the FSWA are to be found.

But it is precisely here, in assessing the approach of organisations to women's oppression, that the feminist perspective begins to reveal its weaknesses. The significance of the ANC and the successive women's sections linked to it, for example, does not lie, first and foremost, in their approach to the women's question, but rather, as organisations of the nationally oppressed, in their approach to the national question. It is through failure to understand the significance of national oppression and the struggle for national liberation that Walker is so dismissive in her assessment of Charlotte Maxeke, that she is so disparaging of the ANC, and that she understates the role or significance of the ANC Women's League in the FSWA and the struggles of women in the fifties.

It is not without irony that she describes the decision of the ANC to establish a Women's League in 1943 as an act which undermined women's equality within the organisation. She states "separate is not equal"! Yet it was not the ANC, nor the Women's League, nor the FSWA nor the Congress Alliance which created the divisions between the races or between men and women. Rather, these organisations were the means whereby the oppressed sought to break down these divisions.

Other shortcomings of the book concern the lack of information on the Congress Alliance and the campaigns waged in the fifties, which contributed significantly to those waged by the FSWA. Is it not significant recognition of the role of the FSWA and women that the National Coordinating Committee of the Congress Alliance set it the task of mobilising women to formulate and present their demands to the Congress of the People? Instead Walker directs our attention to the fact that Helen Joseph was asked to move the demand on "Housing, Security and Comfort", interpreting this as what the national liberation movement regarded as 'pre-eminently a women's concern'.

With regard to the demands made by the women, our attention is drawn to the two which proved to be controversial; for the others we have to look in the appendix. Yet an assessment of these demands would have provided a valuable insight into the concerns of women in that period (and today for that matter).

For all its shortcomings, there are many lessons to be drawn from this book. It is rich in information and interpretation and should be widely read and discussed.

Letsema

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TWO-NATION THEORY AND THE ROLE OF IMPERIALISM

From "Mandla"

Dear Editor,

The contribution by Christos Theodoropoulos, "Colonialism of a Special Type and its Implications", in the *African Communist,* Fourth Quarter 1982, is, in my opinion, the type of nationalist position which is alien to the approach of South African Communists. His over-simplified two-nation conception, by defining the colonial oppressor more or less simply in terms of the whole white population, tends to submerge the role of world imperialism and the fact that the South African state functions as the state of the monopoly capitalists, both local and international. Even at the level of the national liberation organisations, his positions are in general not representative. Already in its programme, adopted in 1962, the South African Communist Party, though it also referred to the existence of two nations in South Africa, a black and a white nation, made quite clear the role of world imperialism and pointed out that the whites, though privileged, are also subject to monopoly capitalist domination and suffer increasingly from fascist rule.

Moreover, since that time there have been decisive developments in respect of South Africa's integration into the world imperialist system and the related shifts in the character of its socio-economic and political system. These changes were reflected in shifts in the approach of the leaders of the African National Congress which found its first dramatic official expression at the organisation's Morogoro Conference in 1969. One only has to look at the documents of that conference to note the growing understanding of the character of the world system of imperialism and its relevance for the liberation struggle in South Africa. This was reflected also at the level of strategy and tactics, including alliance strategy. In the course of the 1970's the anti-imperialist orientation of the ANC was further consolidated, in part through the expulsion of the "Group of 8", factional narrow nationalist elements who were particularly opposed to the big step forward taken by the ANC at the Morogoro Conference. By the middle of the 70's the conception of the role of South Africa as a bastion of the world imperialist system was firmly rooted in the approach of the ANC's leaders.

At the stage which our liberation struggle has reached at the present time, the question of the need for the masses of our people to conquer state power is of supreme importance. It is particularly in this context that the over-simplified two-nation conception can be of especial danger to our struggle against the apartheid monster. By centering his attention on the oppressing "white settler nation" and thus taking, as it were, the whole concept of the state out of the field of vision, Theodoropoulos blurs or completely submerges the question of the need for the masses to conquer state power, to smash the existing state machine and to build a new state of national-democracy.

Moreover, it is clearly somewhat anachronistic that such an article should be written at the very time when the ANC is beginning to emerge in the country (and in the international arena) as the leader of the whole South African people, black and white, at a time, too, when the moment of decisive confrontation with the forces of the apartheid state comes nearer and when, therefore, the attitudes and political and military activities of the whites will be of crucial importance.

As the ANC leaders have emphasised in recent times, the winning over of as many whites as possible to the side of the liberation forces, even into Umkhonto We Sizwe, as well as the neutralisation of others, especially in relation to the question of involvement in the armed forces of the apartheid state, is of great importance. And the fact that whites come over to us has an objective basis, as we have already pointed out. For despite their privileged position within the system of imperialist-colonialist domination, they too are subject to monopoly domination and are affected by the anachronisms, tensions and brutalities of a racist society and by the economic and political crisis of the South African system. The linking of the national liberation and democratic revolution against imperialist and colonialist/neo-colonialist domination in our country will be a crucial element in our future victory.

We cannot now go back to the stage before the Morogoro Conference. True, the main content of our liberation struggle is the national liberation of the African people, together with the people from the Coloured and Indian communities but with that liberation — if it is consummated — will come the freeing of the whole South African people from imperialist domination and fascist rule.

A SCHOOL IN EXILE IS A SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY IN MICROCOSM

From C.T.

Dear Editor,

Eric Stilton correctly notes that there are currently three lines of policy which establish different priorities of ANC education. But — even given that his article is intended as an introduction to discussion — he falls into a dangerous trap by apparently contrasting 'good' and 'sound' pre-tertiary schooling with the revolutionary needs of the struggle. In doing so, he has left himself open to attacks from reactionary elements whose commitment to bourgeois ideology — often with undercurrents of racialism and tribalism — is manifested by their accent on established academic honours. Yet there is not — and cannot be — any contradiction between revolutionary education 'geared towards producing a new type of South African' and the attainment of tertiary qualifications.

The separate policy lines — and the arguments arising from them — concentrate on the supposed needs of the struggle at various stages. Yet these are *tactical* questions. They should not alter the overall strategy of ANC education; the underlying substance.

Production of cadres for whatever stage of the struggle and with whatever technical or academic skills, should not affect the basis of our educational approach, which, by any reading of ANC policy, must be political; must, as Stilton says, produce 'active militants, politically and technically equipped.' Without the correct political orientation and motivation, a student attaining the highest academic levels is, at best, a very dubious asset to the movement and the struggle. On this point, there seems to be no argument.

And since the general principles of ANC policy clearly lay down what should be regarded as 'good' and 'sound' in this context ('. . . a new South African. . . to serve the interests of the people as a whole; combat division between mental and manual. . . arts and sciences; promote the full creative and democratic participation') this should be the starting point. Structures need to be established in accordance with these principles *irrespective of the defined — and changing — perceived needs of the movement.*

A school in exile is, essentially, a South African society in microcosm. And any social organism, in order to function efficiently and effectively, requires rules and procedures — discipline. ANC policy, both in the general and in the strictly educational sense, is based on the creation of an *alternative* society to the regime at present in power; on alternative values. These are assimilated by a community not by any form of metaphysical osmosis or by lengthy verbal innoculations, but by *living* and so experiencing the alternative.

And there cannot be total concentration on so-called students alone. As Stilton points out, there exists 'a class of professionals whose social position and conditions of existence' are such that they are singularly unsuited to apply the alternative values needed. Yet many of these people, their attitudes unchanged, will naturally gravitate toward educational institutions in exile where, if the adequate structures do not exist, they will quickly take leading roles and determine the course and direction of social as well as technical/academic learning. Yet they are as much — perhaps more — in need of political education than any 'students'.

It is only when people of this class outlook take command that the demands of 'external, purely educational institutions' (Stilton) appear to become the determinants of the internal functioning of a school.

On their own, such external bodies cannot be the determinants. They can set certain basic academic levels as the price of admission, but they cannot determine the structure — the political nature — of the institution providing candidates any more than they can demand that students adhere to any specific values or possess particular attitudes.

It is also an error to assume that academic/technical excellence requires the introduction of purely professional instructors whose value systems may be in opposition to those required by ANC policy.

Competent technical/academic instructors — the number and nature would be determined by the role assigned to any school — are certainly required. Those with a 'good', 'sound' political outlook would have no difficulty adjusting to a democratic, collective structure where learning is regarded as a shared experience. Those who might have difficulty would have to learn and adjust or leave. The same basic rule should apply to anyone in any role within the school environment.

The only question is how best to structure an environment based on priciples which stress co-operation and the destruction of artificial barriers, remembering only that any such structure must be consistent; that all are subject to the same rules and expectations of dedication to the movement and the struggle.

WHO ARE THE HEROES OF THE PAST?

From Nyawuza

Dear Editor,

In his letter *(The African Communist,* No 93) Spectator maintains that we are reluctant to examine and give credence to revolutionary experience in our own continent. He says we are loth to acknowledge that class struggle in Africa existed even before the colonialists and that the true heroes of the past were the artisans and builders and the farmers, those who produced the homes and the food and the weapons of self defence, and not the kings and queens who were frequently driven by ambition, involved in intrigues, and incapable of leading the people in united resistance against the invaders.

In answering this important question let us first of all hear what Mandela says about it. It is important to note that, besides being a leader of our people, Mandela is also of royal blood and therefore one of these kings Spectator is referring to. At the Rivonia trial Mandela talked of what he called "my own proudly felt African background" and went on to say:

> "In my youth in the Transkei I listened to the elders of my tribe telling stories of the old days. Amongst the tales they related to me were those of wars fought by our ancestors in defence of the fatherland. The names of Dingane and Bambata, Hintsa and Makana, Squngthi and Dalasile, Moshoeshoe and Sekhukhune were praised as the glory of the entire African nation. I hoped then that life might offer me the opportunity to serve my people and make my own humble contribution to their freedom struggle. This is what motivated me in all that I have done in relation to the charges made against me in this case."

In the same statement he says:

> "Today I am attracted by the idea of a classless society, an attraction which springs in part from Marxist reading and, in part, from the admiration of the structure and organisation of early African societies in this country. The land, then the main means of production, belonged to the tribe. *There were no rich or poor and there was no exploitation.*" (my emphasis).

Surely Mandela and Spectator are not speaking the same language. What Spectator ignores is the fact that in pre-colonial South Africa class divisions were not that advanced. In fact they were still rudimentary. That is why names like Sekhukhune, Moshoeshoe, Hintsa, Maqoma, Shaka, Dingane and others are the pride of the Africans. They were freedom fighters and besides this they are regarded by the different ethnic groups as "fathers of the nation". (The word father in African languages means more than just "father"). How many chiefs were deposed, banned, banished and harassed in the '50's because they refused to accept "Bantu Authorities" or what we today call Bantustans?

What did Mandela mean by "my proudly felt African background?" This could mean many things but in the context of his speech at Rivonia it meant the simple fact that his first political baptism and education came from his own people or his tribe, if you like, and not from school; not even from the ANC. Mandela developed to combine this background with ANC politics, or history with tradition and tradition with revolution.

I agree with Spectator that the "creation of a single nation, rather than secession, will be the legal form that self-determination will take." But I will go further and add that the acceptance of that reality does not necessarily mean the rejection of the principle. After all, it was Lenin who emphasised that the right of self-determination "implies the right to independence in the political sense" and went further to say:

> "This demand therefore is not the equivalent of a demand for separation, fragmentation and the formation of states. It implies only a consistent expression of the struggle against all national oppression."

For the success of our revolution clarity on these issues is of vital importance, otherwise we shall find ourselves involved in serious problems. I am not so much worried by the whole debate on modern and/or traditional revisionism coming from the left and right.

As for the tribe dying or being killed (both expressions are from Spectator), I only wish that he viewed this problem historically, as a process which will guarantee that the grave is deep enough to ensure that the tribe does not resurrect.

CORRECTION

In his article "Marxism After One Hundred Years" in our last issue Andrew Rothstein wrote: "By organising armed raids continuously throughout 1980 over the borders of Afghanistan they (the imperialists) forced defensive measures upon the Soviet Union — for which they cannot forgive it". Andrew Rothstein has since written to point out that "1980" was, of course, a slip of the pen. The year was 1979.

DOCUMENTS

SACP PROTEST ON IRAN PERSECUTION

STATEMENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY, ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, DR. YUSUF MOHAMED DADOO:

The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party wishes to voice the strongest possible protest against the banning of the Iranian People's Party (Tudeh) and the arrest of many of its leading members, including First Secretary Nuredin Kianouri, on trumped-up charges of spying for the Soviet Union. Their alleged "confessions" can only have been obtained by the use of inhuman and diabolical methods of torture. This suppression of the party of the working people of Iran and the persecution of its members represent a grave threat, not only to their lives, but also to the future of the Iranian revolution.

Not only Communists, but also many other democrats and progressive personalities in Iran have been made the victims of a drive by right-wing reactionary forces to take control of the Iranian revolution and steer it away from the true popular course.

No party has a more honourable record than the Tudeh Party in the struggle to free Iran from the shackles of imperialism and foreign domination and ensure that the wealth of the country is enjoyed by the people who labour to produce it. For four decades Communists have given their lives unstintingly in the fight for freedom. They played an outstanding role in helping to mobilise the Iranian workers in the revolutionary upsurge which led to the overthrow of the Shah and his despotic regime in 1979, ousting the imperialist forces, particularly those of the United States, and their local allies who had for so long trampled on the rights of the people. After the defeat of the Shah, the Tudeh Party threw itself wholeheartedly into the struggle to consolidate and strengthen the revolution and defeat the machinations of the counter-revolutionaries who wanted to return Iran to the camp of imperialism and bourgeois reaction.

The anti-communist and anti-Soviet policies which are now being pursued can only weaken the unity of the people, strengthen the hands of the counter-revolutionary forces in Iran and gratify the US which is openly deploying its troops and those of its allies and agents to ensure imperialist control of the resources of the Middle East, including those of Iran. No people's revolution can succeed in the name of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, which history has proved are the weapons of bourgeois reaction.

The South African Communist Party calls for the immediate lifting of the ban on the Tudeh Party and the release of its leaders and all those arrested so that they can continue to work for the success of the Iranian revolution and the consolidation of the progressive forces which is essential if the counter-revolution is to be defeated.

May 11, 1983

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